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50 WORST THINGS ABOUT VIDEO GAMES
WHAT'S #1?
PLUS
12 TIPS FOR SURVIVING YOUR PARENTS' DIVORCE!
STREET GANGS SHOULD YOU JOIN?
Greg Horn
UNITED STATES
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MAD

SEPTEMBER 2005 NUMBER 457

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Politicians only display creative thinking when making excuses after they get caught doing something illegal!

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FRONT COVER ARTIST: GREG HORN

READER ALERT

Hey clods — if you're sending in a digital photo that you want to see in the Letters Page we beg you to please include a phone number or e-mail address so we can contact you for a digital file of the pic. Thanks and happy sending!

MAY THE FA FA FA BE WITH YOU!

Here I am writing you from the valley of the insane, but with good reason. Today, I happened to buy issue #454 and noticed this horrific horrible flaw that should be punishable by death. On your cover you have Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan fighting with red sabers! When in reality they have blue sabers. Wan has always had a blue saber and Ani only gets a red saber after he's burnt to a crisp. I know you are probably very sorry and because most generous am I, I have decided to forgive you.

Tazara Dorsey, Tallahassee, FL

Use the Dorse — You call yourself a *Star Wars* fan? We're surprised you didn't know that even as we write this, George "I'm going to ring every penny out of this franchise" Lucas is re-mastering *Revenge of the Sith* and changing the colors of all the light sabers to red. Other changes include: C-3PO now speaks with a thick Spanish accent, Emperor Palpatine has Elvis-style mutton chops and Mace Windu is now a white woman! Check back in a month for news on Lucas' *special* special edition that will further revise this special edition! —Ed.

FOOL BRITANNIA

After shaping my teenage years in 70s Britain, MAD mags disappeared from our magazine racks in a suspected government conspiracy. So I was surprised to find that not only is it still going but is as funny and irreverent as ever. Even more impressive was that amongst the talented new guys, my favorites from the old gang are still in residence — Sergio Aragones, Al Jaffee and most of all Mort Drucker, who launched my lifelong passion/obsession with drawing and caricature. Just signed up for a two-year subscription and starting to recoup the missing years. Glad to see MAD still rules!

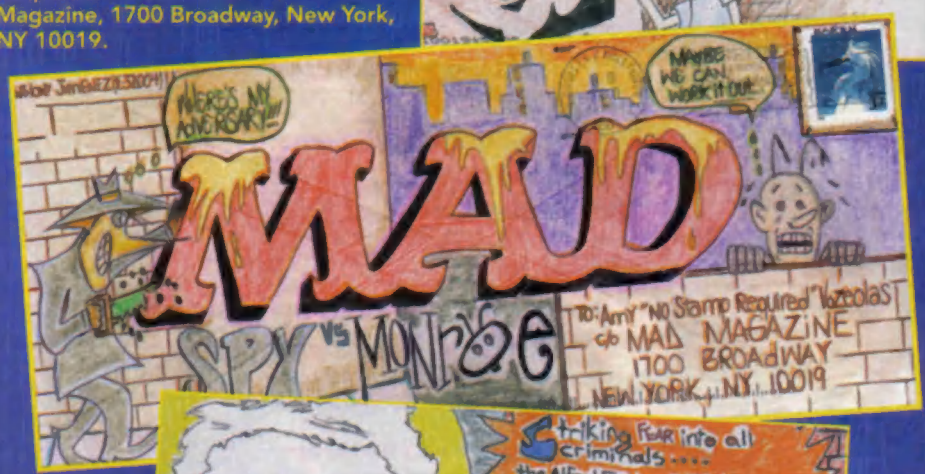
Paul Adams, Warrington, England

Up and Adams — We were touched by your letter and appreciate you saying that "MAD still rules." Too bad the same thing can't be said about Great Britain! God save the Queen! —Ed.

ENVELOPE OF THE MONTH

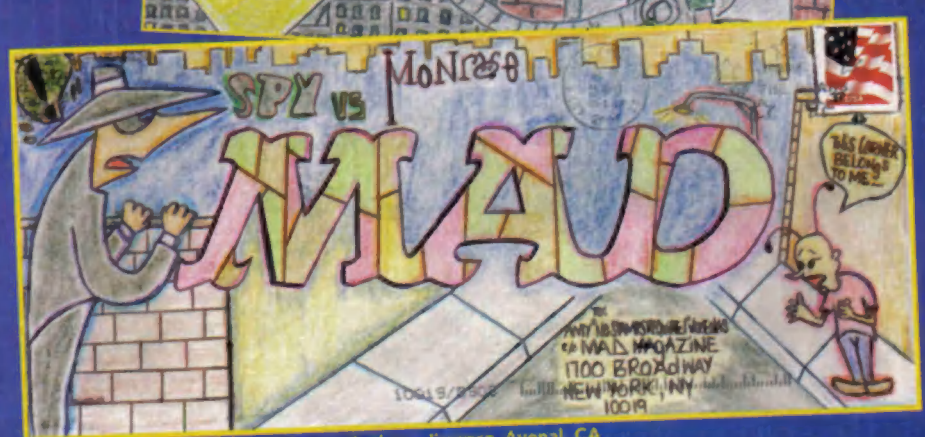
In honor of Monroe's 100th MAD appearance (two months ago...we sort of lost track of time) we're proud to present an all-Monroe edition of Envelope of The Month! You too can achieve "glory" like these readers, simply by sending your artistic envelopes to: Amy "No Stamp Required" Vozeolas c/o MAD Magazine, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

John Olson, Hyde Park, NY



Anthony Jimenez, Avenal, CA

Zachary White, Holden, MA



Anthony Jimenez, Avenal, CA

SNOT READY FOR PRIMETIME

On a recent episode of the show *Two and a Half Men*, Angus T. Young, who plays Jake Harper (you know, the "half man"), picked his way through a copy of MAD Color Classics. We can tell he really dug it!

Make a Dumb Wish Foundation™

I don't know if this has happened before, but what the heck! I would like to make a two-part wish for the *Make A Dumb Wish Foundation™*. You see, I live in a loft in Brooklyn and I had a bar built. Well, my no good friends are always over and I'm always trying to come up with a new drink that might get them sick enough that they won't come back! So the first part of my wish is to have the ingredients for Monkey Juice. I figure they are idiots and the Monkey Juice would be perfect for them. The second part is for you to print a photo of you, Ed., so that we know what you look like...and just in case the Monkey Juice doesn't work, I can show them your picture!

Grant Wesley Johnson, Brooklyn, NY

Grant Theft Auto — You know how we love granting readers' wishes here at the *Make A Dumb Wish Foundation™*. However, certain MAD secrets must be kept hidden. We can't tell you the exact ingredients of Monkey Juice, but we can tell you that it involves five Rhesus Monkeys, a heating pad and a milking stool! As to your second request, we cannot show you what we look like, but we will show you what we'd look like after you drank a couple of pints of the M Juice — va-va-va-voom! Thanks for writing to the *Make A Dumb Wish Foundation™* —Ed.

P.S. Don't be too hard on your friends. If we had to hang out with you, we'd drink, too!

Ed. after a few drinks of monkey juice

THE BIG TEACHER'S PET

I took the picture of the football player in heels from MAD #450 ("Steve Madden Football") and stuck my math teacher Mr. Johanson's face on it. I stuck it on every door in school. The only people I told were my friends, but the problem is that one of them told Mr. Johanson so now I have detention for a month. Please help me before I die of boredom.

Falana Walters, Scarborough, Tobago

Still Walters Run Deep — We've got good news! Not only can we help you pass the time, but we can help you get back into the good graces of your math teacher, Mr. Johanson! We're providing three pictures of today's hottest role models that you can paste Mr. Johanson's mug on top of to make amends. It's a little something we like to call — Mr. Johanson's Cut-N-Paste Activity Corner. You can choose from NBA phenom Yao Ming, glamorous starlet Paris Hilton or Hollywood superstar Tom Cruise! Choose wisely — happy clipping and please send us a copy of your results! —Ed.

THE BIG BERNIE

Back in MAD #454 fans wrote in telling Bernie Amero why they deserved the extra copy of MAD that he bought (he subscribes and he buys the other copy at a local store called The Willow Rest). We, in turn, asked him to choose the "lucky" winner. Below is Bernie's verdict:

Six fellow MAD Magazine readers wrote in and they all would like to have my "extra" copy that I now get monthly. Well, first I'd like to say there are only two people who make out on this deal. First, MAD, you sell two copies and the Willow Rest, they sell at least one copy of MAD a month. Now my pick. I just about went with Prudence Myers' idea of sending it to 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington D.C. (The White House). Good idea, but I'm not sure if anyone would be able to read it there. So I have to go with Pastor Leila Blackburn of Griswold, IA. Why, you ask? Well, I figure she may be close to the one who knows why I buy even one MAD — God only knows!

Bernie Amero, Gloucester, MA

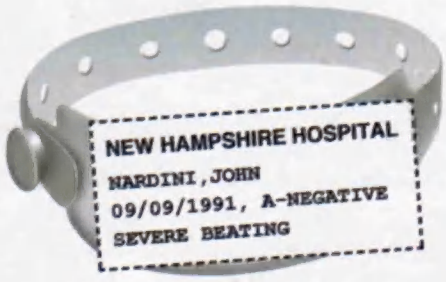
Big Bernie — It's like we always say, it never hurts to kiss up to the Big Man! And because you did the right thing and were such a good sport, we're going to go ahead and send Pastor Leila a one-year subscription on your behalf. Of course, this doesn't exactly solve your extra issue problem, but maybe you'll find some answers in the Good Book! —Ed.

SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCK-OUTS

Next year I will be going to high school (hopefully)! Do you guys have anything that will help me survive it? Since I'm a reader of your magazine, I'm sure I will get beaten up many times, so I could use anything you guys have so that I don't die.

John Nardini, Chichester, NH

Revenge of the Nard — We're not going to lie to you. Judging from your letter, we're pretty sure you've got four years of brutal, near-fatal beatdowns heading your way. But we do have something that may help prevent your death. It is a pre-printed hospital admissions bracelet. We have taken the liberty of filling in your name and we took a guess on your blood type (hey, c'mon, blood is blood). Simply cut it out, tape it on and save valuable check-in time during your countless E.R. visits. See you in x-ray! —Ed.

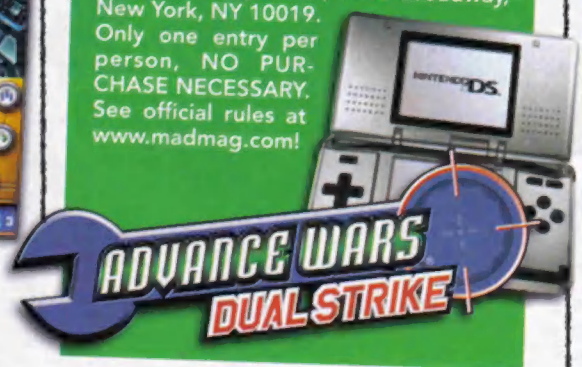


READER ALERT

Everyone that has their letter published in this month's Letters Page will receive a copy of *Nanostray* for Nintendo DS™, courtesy of Majesco Games, who inform us that this game is the "only shooter for the Nintendo DS™." For those who didn't get their missives printed, you'll have to go out and buy the game, which is on sale now!

HOW TO WIN A NINTENDO DS™ SYSTEM

Hey, did you just win a game for a Nintendo DS™ and do you need something to play it on? Well today is your lucky day! In fact, even if you didn't get your letter published, you can still enter to win one of three amazingly cool prize packages which consists of a Nintendo DS™ system and a copy of *Advance Wars: Dual Strike* (ERSB rated E for cartoon violence and available in stores August 22, 2005), courtesy of Nintendo. To enter, on a 3x5 card, hand print your name, complete address and e-mail address. Mail it to Nintendo DS Sweepstakes c/o MAD Magazine, Dept. 457, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. Only one entry per person, NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. See official rules at www.madmag.com!



ANTIQUES FREAKSHOW WITH HANS BRICKFACE

Here's something for your perusal. This is a photograph of a family heirloom that's owned by the mother-in-law of a gal I work with. Not only are they interested in the value of it, we are all interested in finding out what it is. Guesses have been a frog sitting on the back of a colorful three-legged turtle, a toad on a possum, and my guess, a space alien on the back of a penguin on a mushroom trip.

Jim Poage, Tempe, AZ

Poage's Gallery — We caught up with MAD's resident antique expert Hans Brickface as he was appraising (for insurance purposes) a shipment of counterfeit "Live Strong" bracelets. Here's his response:

A three-legged turtle? A possum? A penguin? A sure sign of good art is that it sparks discussion and it is open to varied interpretations. However, you are all wrong! This is a ceramic depiction of Sweden's most famous cartoon duo, Fältöljer, the passive-aggressive anteater and Fotpallar the asexual pregnant toad. Unfortunately, the sculpture shows Fotpallar in his second trimester as opposed to the more valuable third trimester. Hope is not all lost, though — your set includes their arch nemesis, the extremely rare Komfortitlbehor, the house plant. Together the set is worth 130 Krona, or $50 in IKEA store credit!

Hey readers! If you have an offbeat item that you want Hans to look at, send in a picture and a brief description to: Amy "The Big Appraiser" c/o MAD Magazine, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

NEXT MONTH IN MAD #458 ON SALE SEPTEMBER 13!

MAD'S 50 WORST THINGS ABOUT VIDEO GAMES! A LOOK AT ADAM SANDLER 24/7!

MAD

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founder

John Ficarra
editor

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Contributing Artists And Writers
the usual gang of idiots

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Fax MAD at 212-506-4848!

THE FUNDALINI

THIS MONTH'S HOT NEW TOYS

RAPCO'S Pocket Mazes™!

Simply line up the BB "bullets" so they rest in the holes where The Game and 50 Cent were wounded. It's a blast!

50 CENT'S NINE-HOLE COURSE

THE GAME: THE GAME

Note: RAPCO plans on releasing updated versions of these pocket mazes as future feuds dictate.

THE PUZZLE NOOK

Which of the 6 choices best completes this phrase?

USE __?__CE ONLY AS A LAST RESORT

1. FOR__
2. THE POST OFFI__
3. A GUIDANCE COUNSELOR'S ADVI__
4. CIA INTELLIGEN__
5. NICOLE RICHIE'S CONSCIEN__
6. FLATULEN__

THE FAST 5

5 THINGS TO EXPECT AT THE WEDDING OF TOM CRUISE & KATIE HOLMES

The ceremony is delayed for hours as Tom harangues the minister and tries to convert him to Scientology.

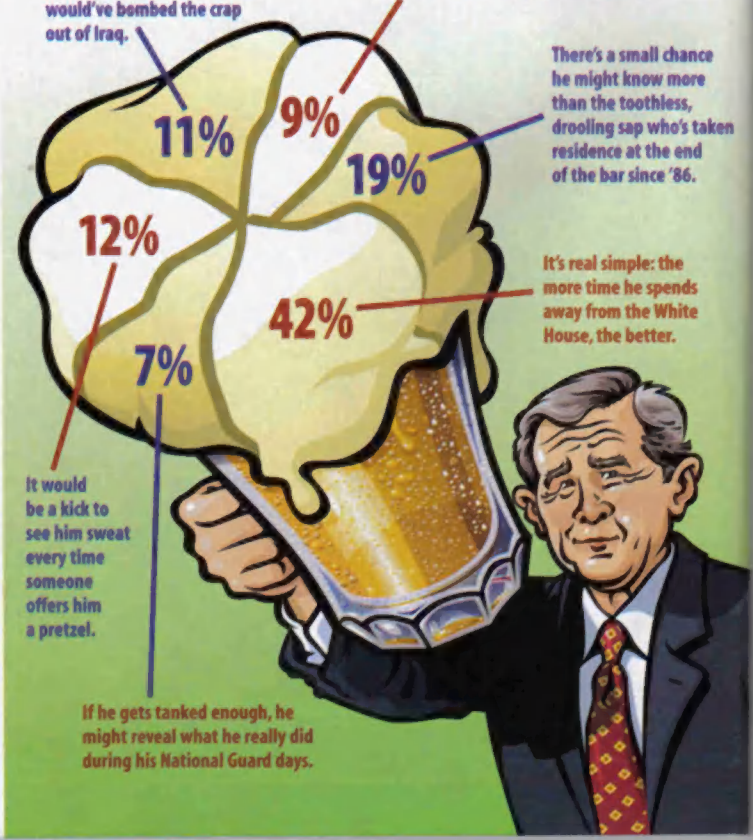
Instead of just saying "I do," Tom jumps up and down on the altar like a freakin' moron for 40 minutes.

The plastic bride and groom on top of the cake are only slightly less animated than Tom and Katie's performances in *War of the Worlds* and *Batman Begins*.

When the minister says "If anyone knows any reasons why these two should not be joined in matrimony" the place is filled with the "ouches" of 300 guests biting their tongues.

Before leaving the reception hall, Tom puts down a deposit for his next wedding.

WHY AMERICANS STILL WANT TO HAVE A BEER WITH GEORGE BUSH


Any bender would be improved by his rambling, yet entertaining, monologue about how Jesus would've bombed the crap out of Iraq.
11%
After a few beers, his opposition to gay marriage is usually replaced with a drunken offer to marry every guy in the joint.
9%
There's a small chance he might know more than the toothless, drooling sap who's taken residence at the end of the bar since '86.
19%
12%
It's real simple: the more time he spends away from the White House, the better.
42%
7%
It would be a kick to see him sweat every time someone offers him a pretzel.
If he gets tanked enough, he might reveal what he really did during his National Guard days.

PAGES

ACTIVIST RIBBONS WE'D LIKE TO SEE

COMPULSIVE EATING | HEMORRHOID AWARENESS | SEXUAL ABSTINENCE

THE GODFREY REPORT

IN	FIVE MINUTES AGO	OUT
Distilling it	Boiling it down	Getting to the Meat of it
Fishtailing	Jackknifing	Hydroplaning
Hijinks	Monkeyshines	Shenanigans

CELEBRITY CAUSE-OF-DEATH BETTING ODDS

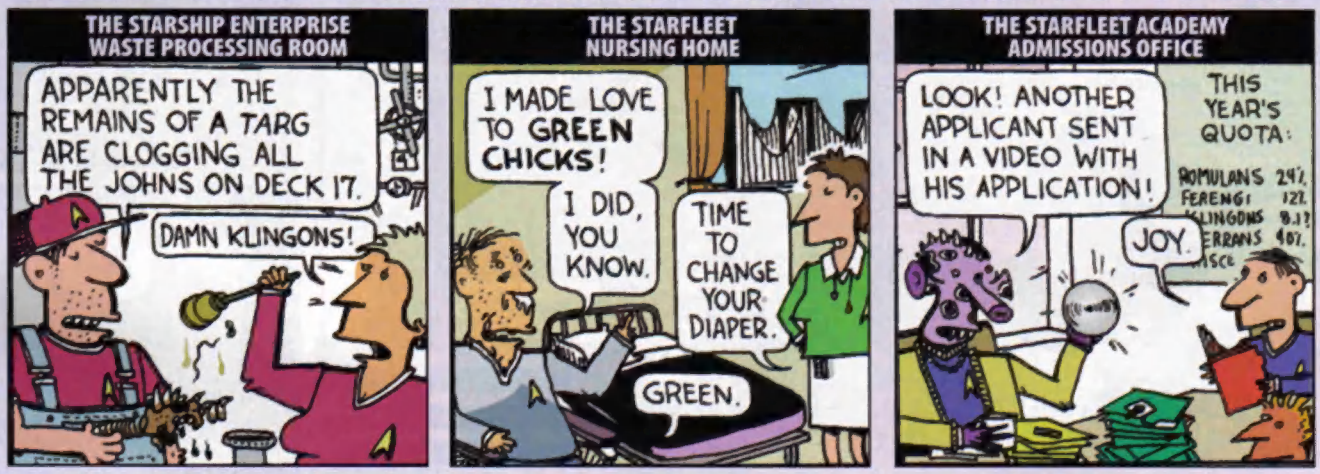
This month: DAVE CHAPPELLE

OUR TEAM OF CRACK ODDSMAKERS GIVES YOU THE LATEST VEGAS LINE ON HOW ONE OF TODAY'S BIGGEST STARS WILL MEET HIS DEMISE!

CAUSE OF DEATH	ODDS
Pummeled by staffs of *The Daily Show*, *South Park* and *Crank Yankers* for sucking up any raises they would've gotten with his $50 million Comedy Central contract	2:1
ODs on various drugs and booze while employing "method acting" approach to prepare for his upcoming Rick James movie role	3:1
Bumped off by feminists furious he's succeeded in making the term "bitch" socially acceptable	5:1
Head tumor caused by wearing ridiculous 1930s-style golfer caps to work day after day after day	9:1
Pummeled by agent who lost his 10% commission on the $50 million Chappelle had to return to Comedy Central after wigging out	12:1

Star Trek: 6 television series. 726 episodes. 10 movies. Amazingly, however, there are still

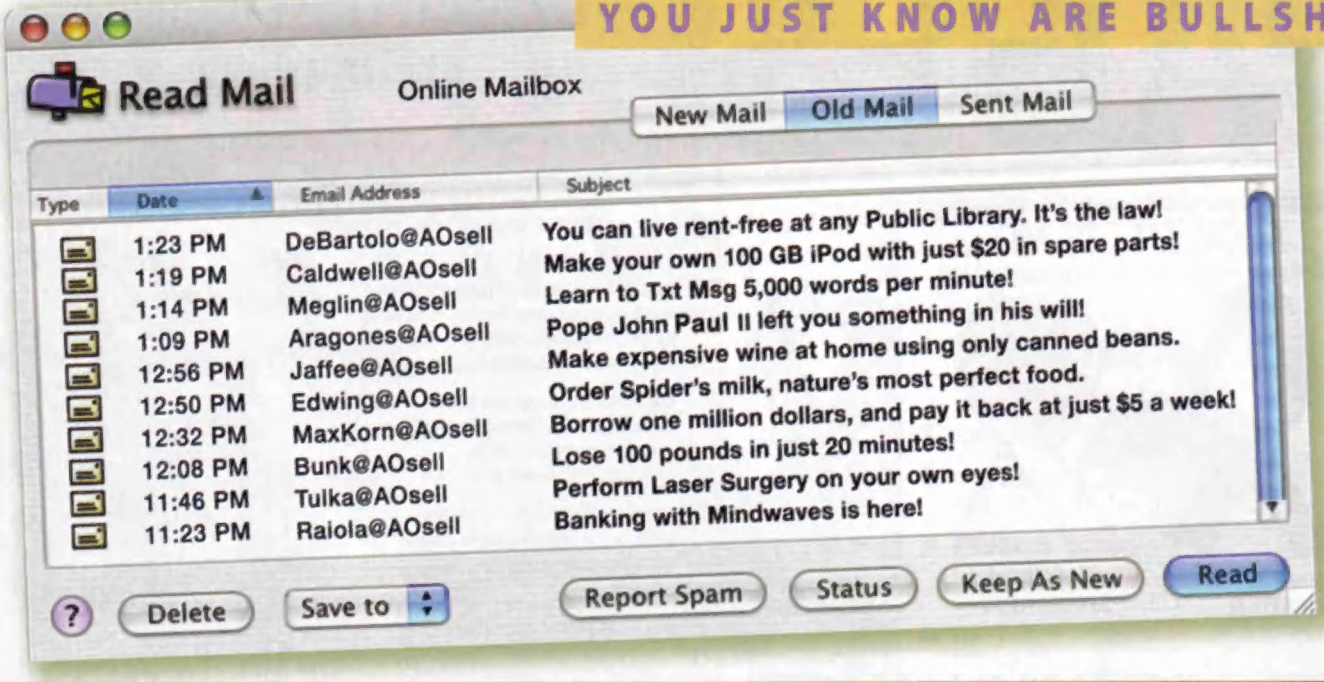
AREAS OF THE STAR TREK UNIVERSE WE NEVER GOT TO SEE


THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE WASTE PROCESSING ROOM
APPARENTLY THE REMAINS OF A TARG ARE CLOGGING ALL THE JOHNS ON DECK 17.
DAMN KLINGONS!
THE STARFLEET NURSING HOME
I MADE LOVE TO GREEN CHICKS!
I DID, YOU KNOW.
TIME TO CHANGE YOUR DIAPER.
GREEN.
THE STARFLEET ACADEMY ADMISSIONS OFFICE
LOOK! ANOTHER APPLICANT SENT IN A VIDEO WITH HIS APPLICATION!
THIS YEAR'S QUOTA:
ROMULANS 24%
FERENGI 12%
JOY.

THE UPDATED LIBRARY OF EXTREMELY THIN BOOKS

OUTSPOKEN FEMINISTS IN THE ARAB WORLD
The BIG BOOK of Successful Liberal Talk-Radio Hosts
THE WIT AND WISDOM OF ROB & AMBER
PEDOPHILE PRIESTS WHO'VE BEEN PROPERLY PUNISHED
THINGS I LOVE ABOUT THE BLUE STATES BY ANN COULTER
THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA COOKBOOK OF GREAT-TASTING MEALS
A COMPENDIUM OF U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENTS WHO CAN SPEAK ARABIC
OVERPAID MIGRANT WORKERS
AMERICAN IDOL JUDGES I HAVE SLEPT WITH BY COREY CLARK
PHOTOGRAPHS OF USHER WEARING A SHIRT
NOTABLE JEWISH BULLFIGHTERS
A GUIDE TO GEORGE W. BUSH'S PRO-CHOICE JUDICIAL NOMINEES

SPAM EMAIL HEADINGS
YOU JUST KNOW ARE BULLSH*T


Read Mail
Online Mailbox
New Mail
Old Mail
Sent Mail
Type
Date
Email Address
Subject
1:23 PM DeBartolo@AOsell You can live rent-free at any Public Library. It's the law!
1:19 PM Caldwell@AOsell Make your own 100 GB iPod with just $20 in spare parts!
1:14 PM Meglin@AOsell Learn to Txt Msg 5,000 words per minute!
1:09 PM Aragones@AOsell Pope John Paul II left you something in his will!
12:56 PM Jaffee@AOsell Make expensive wine at home using only canned beans.
12:50 PM Edwing@AOsell Order Spider's milk, nature's most perfect food.
12:32 PM MaxKorn@AOsell Borrow one million dollars, and pay it back at just $5 a week!
12:08 PM Bunk@AOsell Lose 100 pounds in just 20 minutes!
11:46 PM Tulka@AOsell Perform Laser Surgery on your own eyes!
11:23 PM Raiola@AOsell Banking with Mindwaves is here!
?
Delete
Save to
Report Spam
Status
Keep As New
Read

WHAT YOUR PARENTS SAY/WHAT YOU HEAR

PARENTS SAY... "Trust us, you're really going to love sleepaway camp!"
YOU HEAR ... "We want you out of our freakin' hair!"
PARENTS SAY... "I don't care who's going to be there, you are not going to that party!"
YOU HEAR ... "Ever wonder if you could sneak out of and back into a pitch-black house without waking us up?"
PARENTS SAY... "Because I said so!"
YOU HEAR ... "Actually, you're right, but I'm way too worn out to come up with a decent answer!"
PARENTS SAY... "I am not buying you that stupid video game, and that's final!"
YOU HEAR ... "Beg, plead, and whine ten hours a day for the next week, and Halo 2 is all yours!"
PARENTS SAY... "You are not seeing that trashy R-rated movie!"
YOU HEAR ... "Buy a ticket to that dumb Disney movie and just sneak in!"
PARENTS SAY... "If you fail one more quiz, you're grounded!"
YOU HEAR ... "You know, with the right pen, an 'F' can be turned into a 'B' like that!"

FRIENDS OF FUNDALINI

Peter Bagge
Paul Coker
Dick DeBartolo
Nate Fakes
Frank Jacobs
Peter Kuper
Jacob Lambert
Barry Liebmann
Scott Mendenhall
Patrick Merrell
Ted Rall
Timothy Shamey
Mike Snider
Jack Syracuse

THE PRESIDENT'S DOG

MAD's 50 WORST THINGS ABOUT... VIDEO GAMES

OUR EXCLUSIVE LIST OF THE MOST ANNOYING, AGGRAVATING AND HIGHLY OBNOXIOUS STUFF THAT DRIVES GAMERS CRAZY!

1 Game designers who can't understand why more women don't play video games, especially since they feature such outstanding female role models as a globetrotting archeologist (with big boobs), world-class volleyball champions (with big boobs) and, of course, easily murdered hookers (with big boobs).

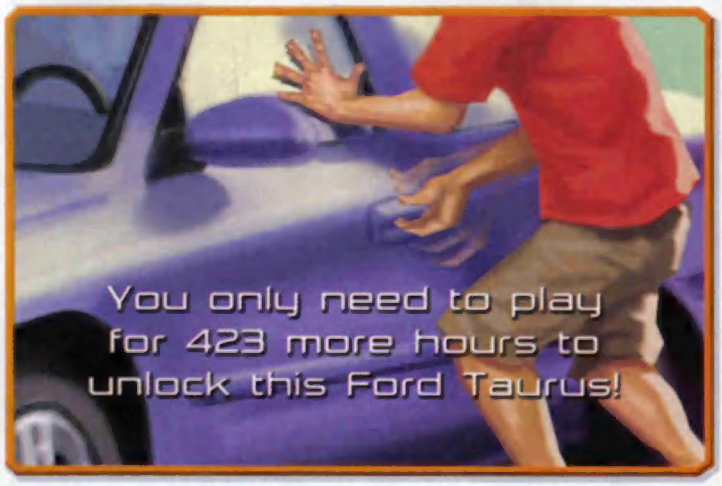
2 Console manufacturers selling systems without basic essentials like memory cards or a second controller, so you have to shell out another 60 bucks before you can see so much as a hair on Luigi's mustache.

3 The once-realistic *Sims* "busting out" into settings so fake and ridiculous, it's only a matter of time before we see *The Sims Team Up With Sonic the Hedgehog to Take on the Giant Fire-Breathing Turtles.*

ARTISTS: PETER BAGGE, SCOTT BRICHER, HERMANN MEJIA, FRANCIS MAO
WRITERS: KENNY BYERLY, JACOB LAMBERT, MATTHEW SCHWARTZ, DAVID SHAYNE

4 Sega's long, pathetic parade of short-lived console systems, from the Sega CD to the 32X to the Saturn to the Dreamcast, establishing a legacy of failure on its way to rivaling that of the Chicago Cubs.

5 The "total time played" stats on your memory card, which only serve to prove to your parents how many hours you've wasted playing video games instead of doing your homework.



6 Games that make too many of their features "unlockable." Just to enjoy everything, you're forced to jump through more hoops than a dolphin at Sea World.

7 Downloading "patches" for the latest and greatest massive-multiplayer extravaganza. You mean our 50 bucks AND the monthly fee didn't actually include a finished product?

8 Mind-numbingly dull "cinema sequences" — as if we really needed to interrupt the game with ten minutes of bad acting and clichéd dialogue to explain the deep motives and back story of why Ratchet and Clank are running and jumping.

Sorry I missed your call earlier. I was in the middle of playing *Tomb Raider* on my phone.
That game sucks.
Yeah, I know. But it's on my PHONE! Isn't that cool?

9 Choppy, second-rate video games designed for cell phones. Was text messaging not a useless enough way to drain battery power?

10 Video game magazines that spend months hyping a game as the second coming, lavishing it with praise and eagerly counting down to its release date, only to dismiss it when it comes out as third-rate, over-hyped crap.

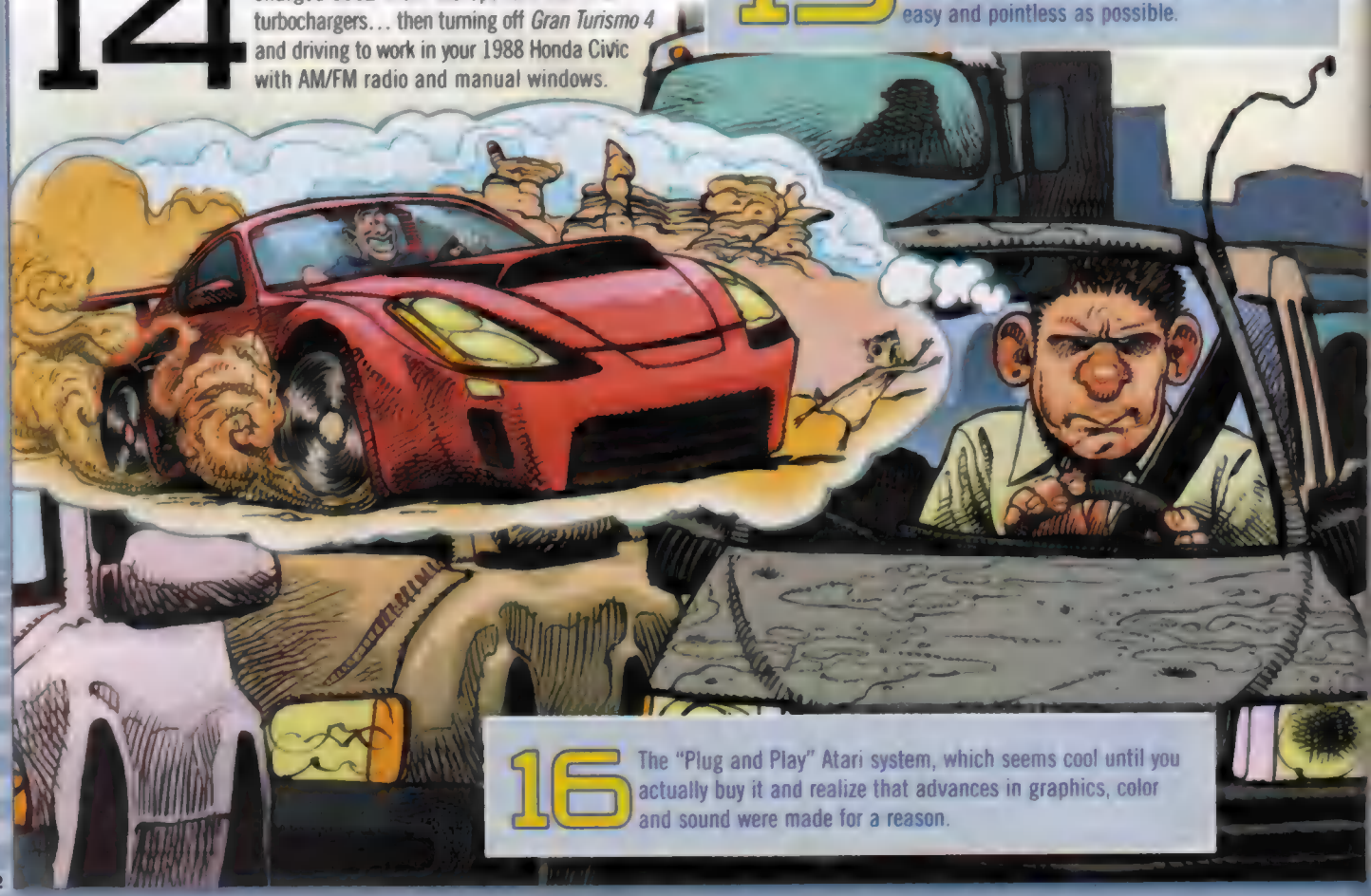
11 Video game reviews from *Maxim* or *FHM* – as if their readers will actually stop "juggling their joysticks" to photos of Eliza Dushku long enough to go out and buy the game.

12 All tasks that involve searching for keys to open a door, secret passageway, treasure chest or anything else crucial to your success. You mean a character running around tirelessly with ten machine guns and thousands of rounds of ammo can't just shoot a freakin' door open?

13 Selling multiple versions of the same *Pokémon* games with different creatures in each one, so you have to buy them both. It's almost as shameless as making collectors buy two identical magazines with different covers.

14 Racing through the Grand Canyon in a supercharged 350Z with ARC spoilers and HKS turbochargers... then turning off *Gran Turismo 4* and driving to work in your 1988 Honda Civic with AM/FM radio and manual windows.

15 Wannabe gamers who drop $200 on a system and another $50 on a game, then immediately look up the cheat codes that make playing as easy and pointless as possible.



16 The "Plug and Play" Atari system, which seems cool until you actually buy it and realize that advances in graphics, color and sound were made for a reason.

17 Falling for EA's annual con of forking over 50 bucks for the improved version of *Madden Football*, since "improved" apparently means adding a couple of dozen bench players and seven new versions of Madden yelling, "Boom! He sure knows how to tackle!"

18 Vietnam games that make you wonder if any national tragedy is off-limits for crass exploitation.

19 Getting psyched to watch *Spider-Man 2* on your brand-new PlayStation Portable, then realizing the battery will get you about as far as the opening credits.

20 *Donkey Konga*, which combines the '60s-era art of bongo drumming with none of the mind-bending hallucinogens that made it tolerable in the first place.

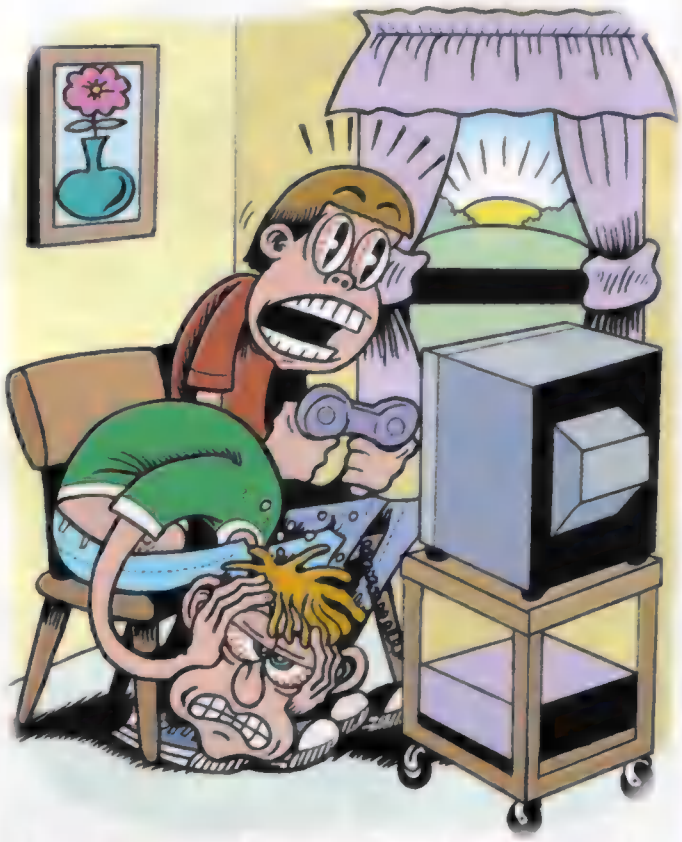
21 Finding out that your school photo looks just as dorky and pathetic digitally pasted on to a cool skater's body in *Tony Hawk's Underground* as it does hanging in your parents' den.

22 Rockstar's "exclusive" deal to keep *Grand Theft Auto* on PlayStation 2, only to turn around and put a better version on Xbox a few months later. For some inexplicable reason we were expecting upstanding ethical behavior from a company whose game glorifies a hooker-killing, drug-dealing gangbanger.

23 Having to "level up" your characters in role-playing games to the point where it requires more work than your actual job.

24 Highly-anticipated releases like *Half-Life 2* and *Doom 3*, which boast innovative, thrilling new ways for you to, uh...kill stuff.

25 Mario's ridiculous Italian accent, which comes in just behind *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*'s infamous "Kill all the Haitians" message as the worst ethnic offense in gaming.



26 Having a balance of ten cents on your arcade card, which is totally good for nothing and yet you STILL can't bring yourself to chuck it.

27 Obnoxious gaming buddies who successfully guilt you into letting them "try this level just one more time," which quickly turns into a half hour, then hours on end and, finally, daybreak.

28 The idiotic rationalization that video games are good for hand-eye coordination, as if that weren't also true of any other activity involving doing a thing to another thing.

29 Sports games that realistically simulate the athletic experience with shots of players scratching themselves — as if getting an up-close view of Yao Ming playing pocket pool is why we fantasize about playing in the NBA.

30 Games with development cycles that are so long and with release dates forever delayed — even the friggin' *Sopranos* produce new episodes faster.

31 Having to blow $9.99 on a book of tip codes because the game you want them for is the ONLY one that hasn't been typed up for free on the Internet.

32 Your disgusting friend who grabs your controller with his clammy hands immediately after thoroughly licking Cheetos residue off each and every finger.

33 Juiced-up versions of old Atari games, which are way too complex for fans of the originals and way too lame for everybody else.

34 Trying to make a boring game like golf more "extreme" by adding violence, scantily-clad babes and dubbing it *Outlaw Golf*, meaning we'll soon have *Outlaw Shuffleboard*, *X-treme Badminton* and *Ultra-Psycho Desperado Horseshoes*.

35 The horrible realization that you're such a spaz that if you played *Dance Dance Revolution* head-to-head with William Hung, you'd lose. Bad.

36 With the endless success of cash-cow series like *Final Fantasy*, *Medal of Honor*, and *The Legend of Zelda*, virtually every game out there is either a sequel to a past game or an inferior imitation of a hit game. These days, an actual new, original gaming experience is rarer than a funny David Spade movie.

37 The Army's cost-cutting use of video games to train its soldiers, which will really pay off when we finally invade the frozen wastelands of Tallon IV.

38 Blowing on NES cartridges and holding down "RESET." We know it was a long time ago, but man, that sucked.

39 Saving a whopping four bucks per game by buying pre-owned ones — when you do the math, it's like getting 13 scratched-up disks of dubious playability for the price of twelve!

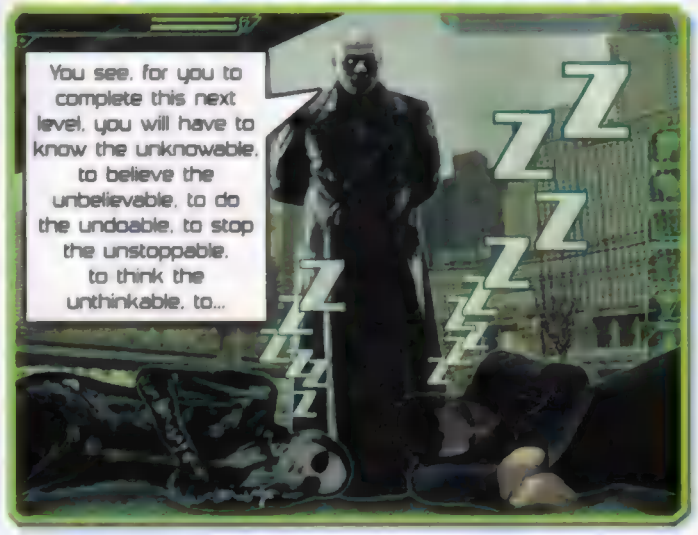
40 Companies that make a big deal of hiring slumming D-list Hollywood talent to record a few sound clips for their game, as if David Arquette's involvement has ever made *anything* better.

41 Now that multi-player games are best played with online opponents, video game recluses can finally stop bothering to make friends to play with, thus freeing them of their last tether to normal human society.

42 Games that boast 50 hours of gameplay when 48 of them consist of re-tracing your tracks through the same area you've already been through nine freakin' times.

43 Trying to decide which sucks more: movies based on video games or video games based on movies.

44 *Enter the Matrix*: The only thing in the world that could actually make the two *Matrix* sequels seem coherent and interesting.


You see, for you to complete this next level, you will have to know the unknowable, to believe the unbelievable, to do the undoable, to stop the unstoppable, to think the unthinkable, to...
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z

45 The ESRB ratings, which are a big help for parents who can't decide whether or not *Killzone* is suitable for their six-year-old.

46 *Sims*-addicted roommates who practice better personal hygiene online than they do in real life.

47 Cheesy gaming articles in *Time* and *Newsweek* that are the journalistic equivalent of your mom trying to dance to OutKast.

48 Disc 5 of the *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* box set — we just don't like it.

49 Realizing that a) there's not a woman's beach volleyball player in the world who looks like that and b) if there were, she wouldn't sleep with a pasty-faced dork who plays electronic volleyball all day.

50 Games that, despite being based on "cool" characters, just plain suck. You know, like, *Spy Vs. Spy*.

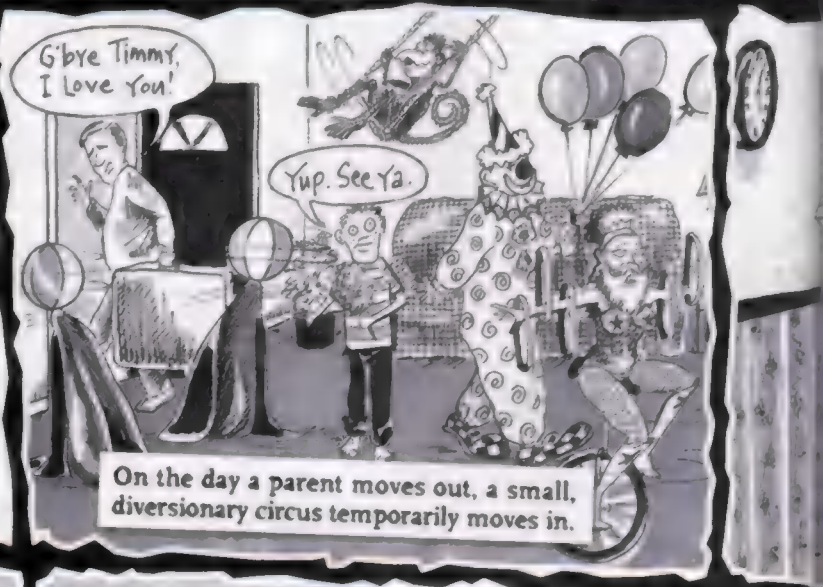
SPY VS SPY

WHACK!!
THUNK!
KUPER

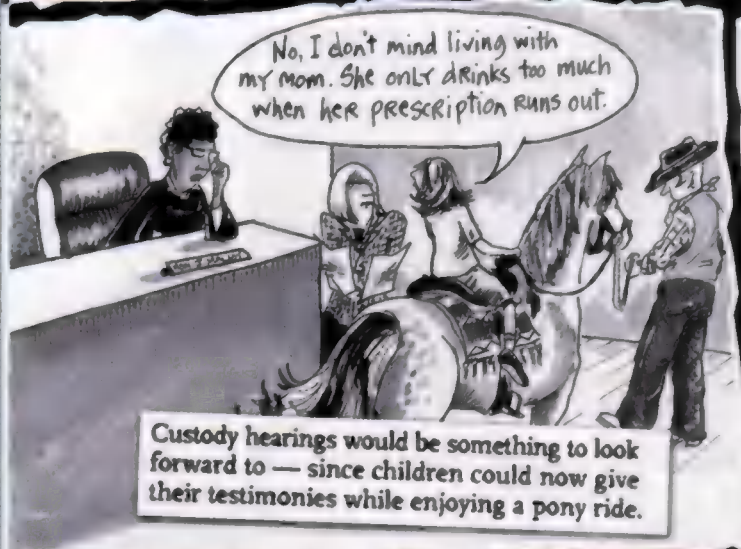
Everyone's always saying that divorce is hardest on the children. But what they DON'T say is that it doesn't HAVE to be! It's high time that split-up parents start using these...

12 WAYS TO MAKE D

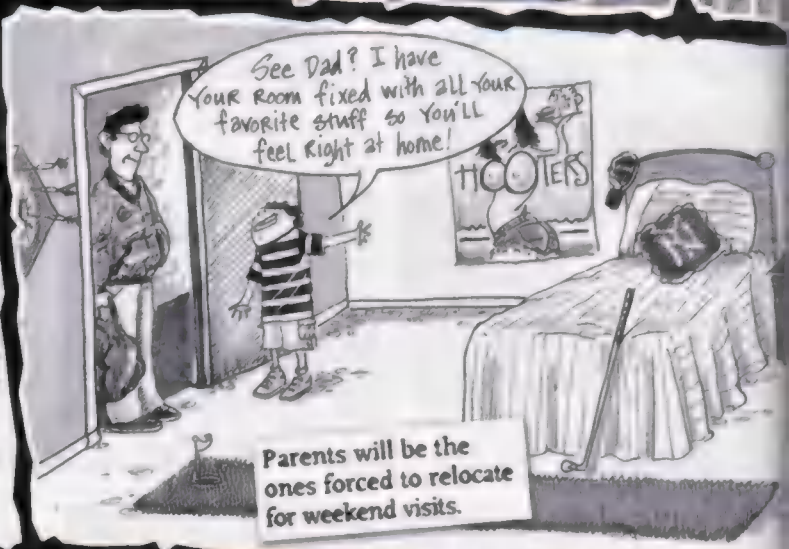
A six-week homework-free divorce leave would be granted to all school-aged children.



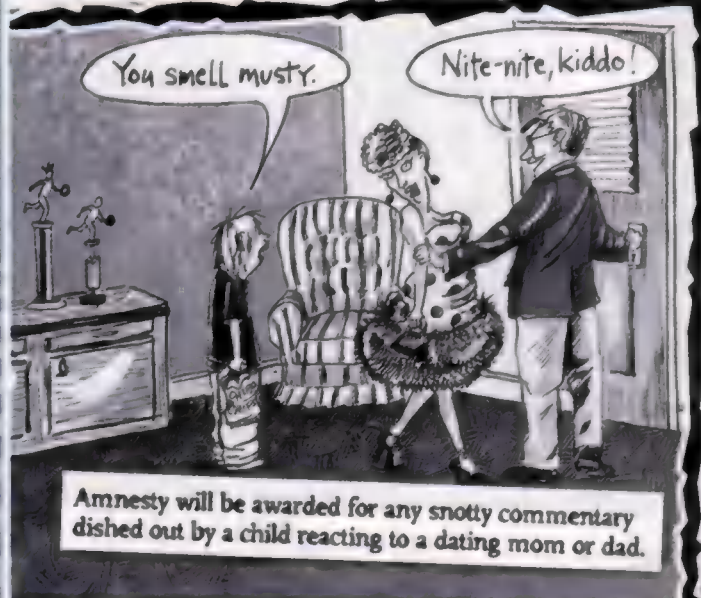
On the day a parent moves out, a small, diversionary circus temporarily moves in.



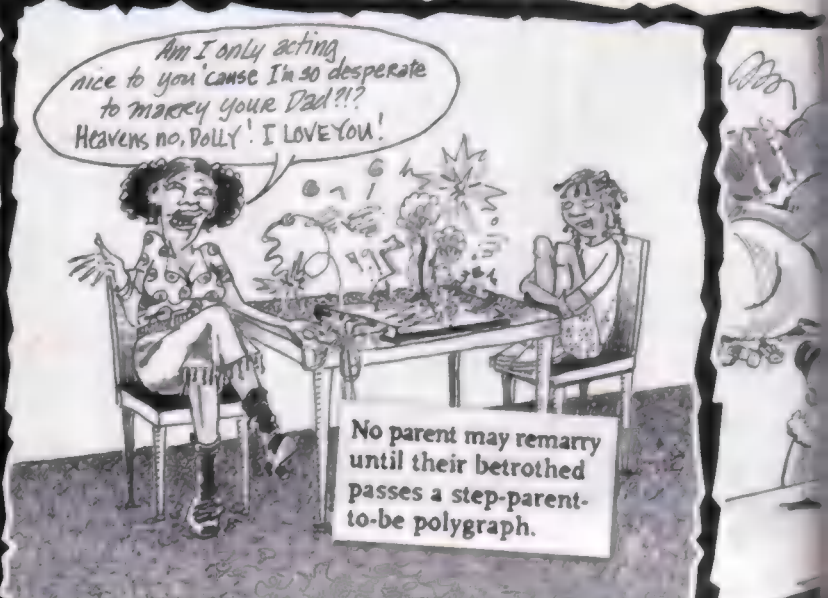
Custody hearings would be something to look forward to — since children could now give their testimonies while enjoying a pony ride.



Parents will be the ones forced to relocate for weekend visits.



Amnesty will be awarded for any snotty commentary dished out by a child reacting to a dating mom or dad.

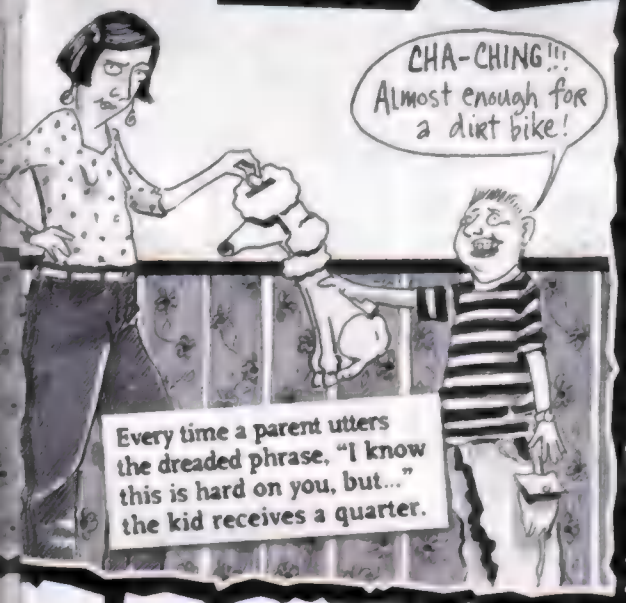


No parent may remarry until their betrothed passes a step-parent-to-be polygraph.

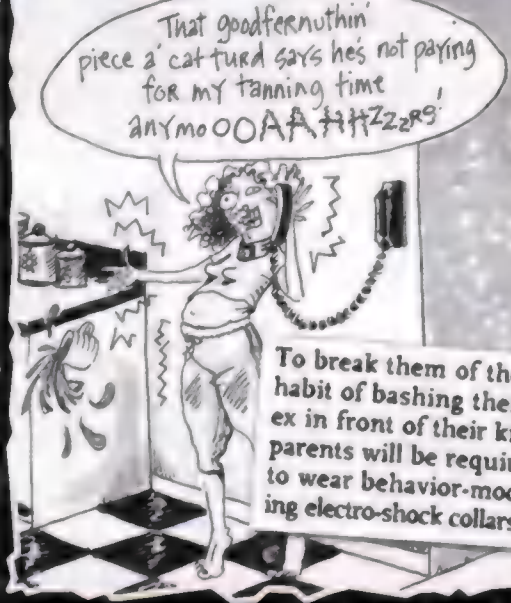
VORCE

EASIER ON KIDS

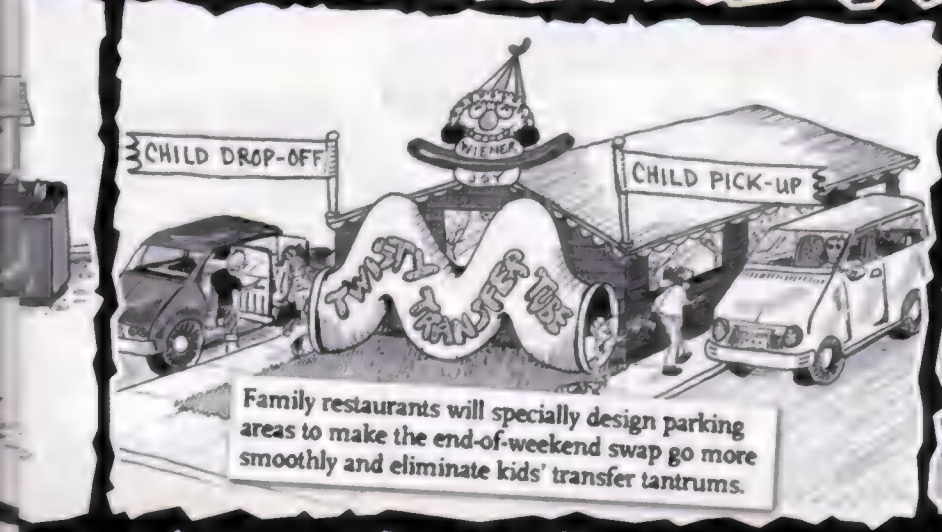
ARTIST AND WRITER:
TERESA BURNS PARKHURST



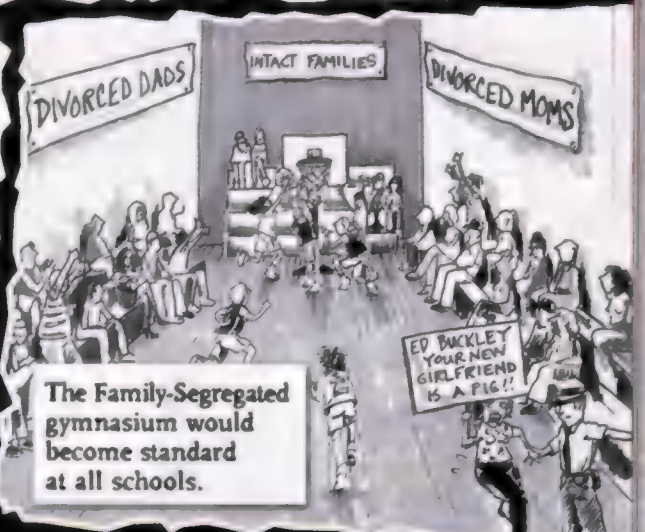
Every time a parent utters the dreaded phrase, "I know this is hard on you, but..." the kid receives a quarter.



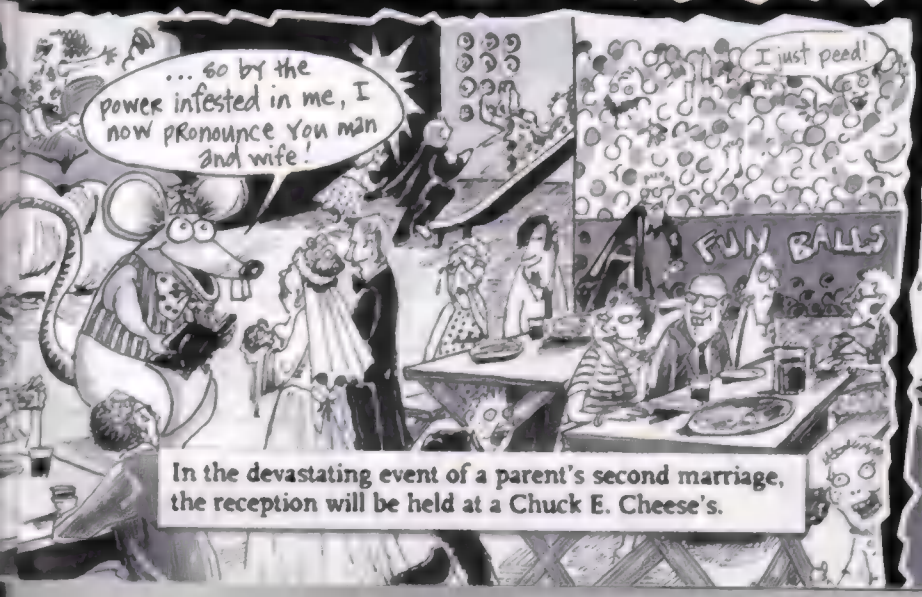
To break them of the habit of bashing their ex in front of their kids, parents will be required to wear behavior-modifying electro-shock collars.



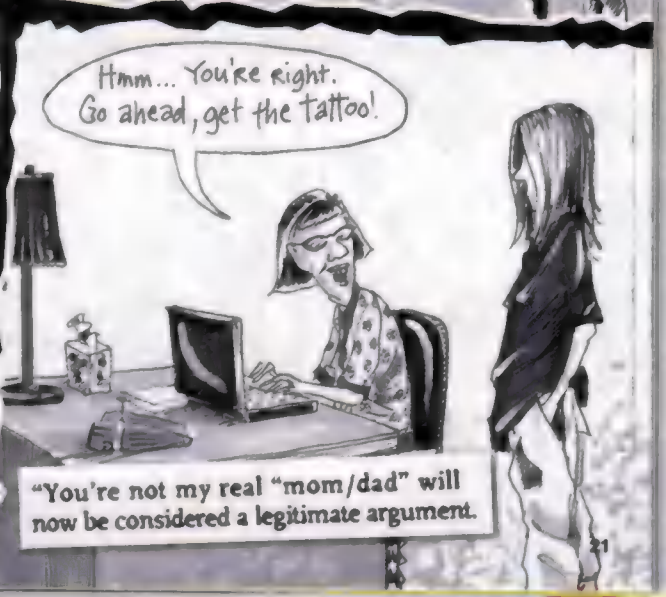
Family restaurants will specially design parking areas to make the end-of-weekend swap go more smoothly and eliminate kids' transfer tantrums.



The Family-Segregated gymnasium would become standard at all schools.

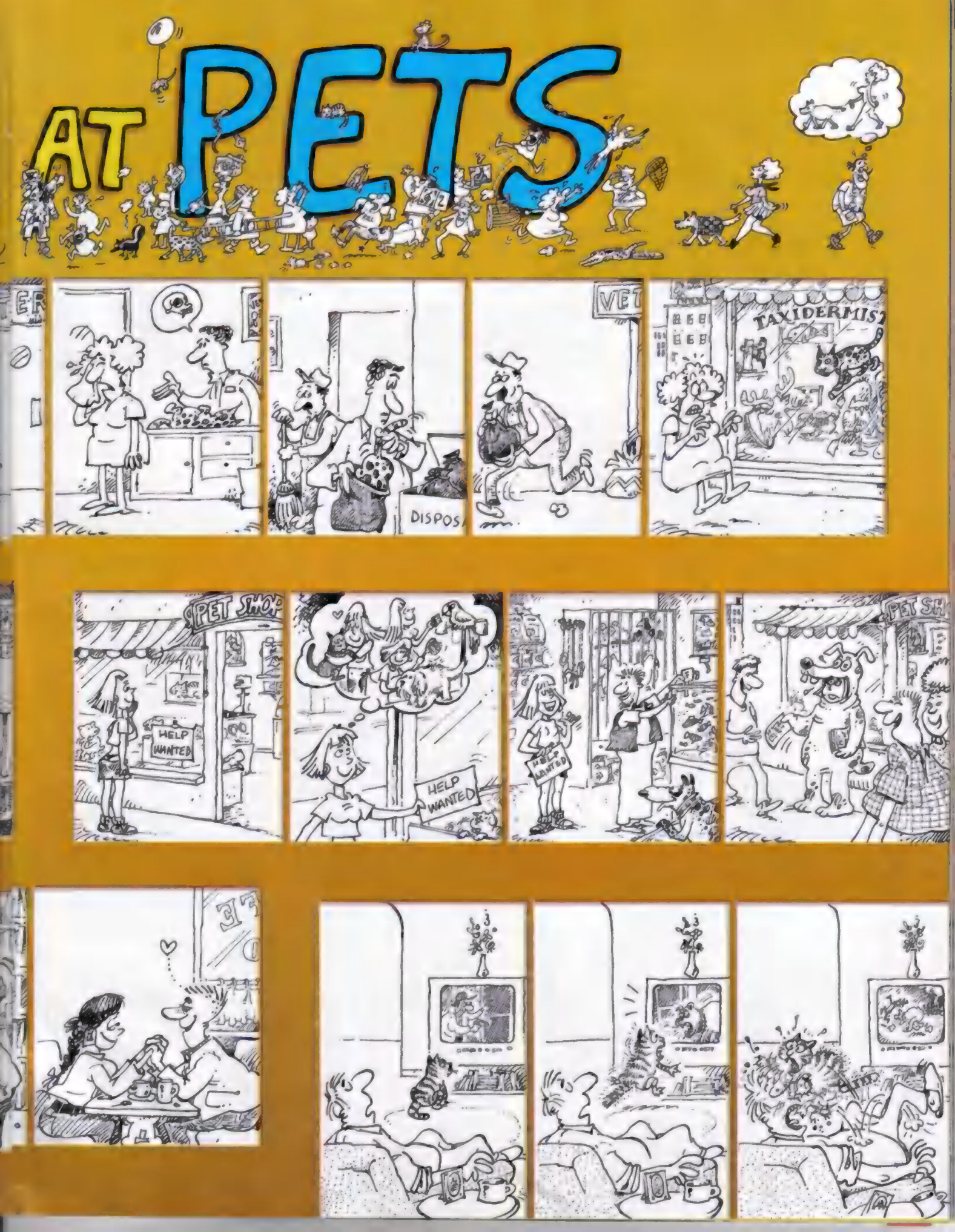


In the devastating event of a parent's second marriage, the reception will be held at a Chuck E. Cheese's.

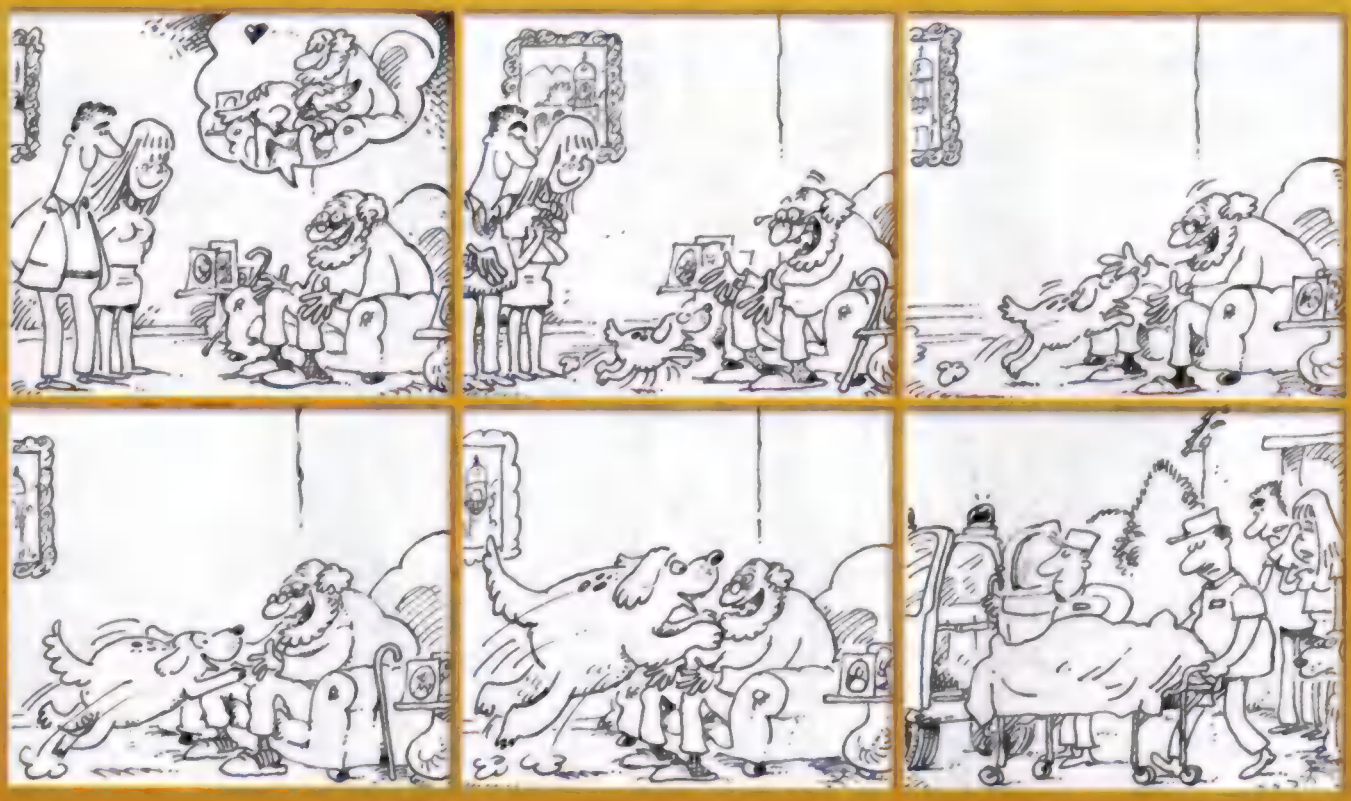


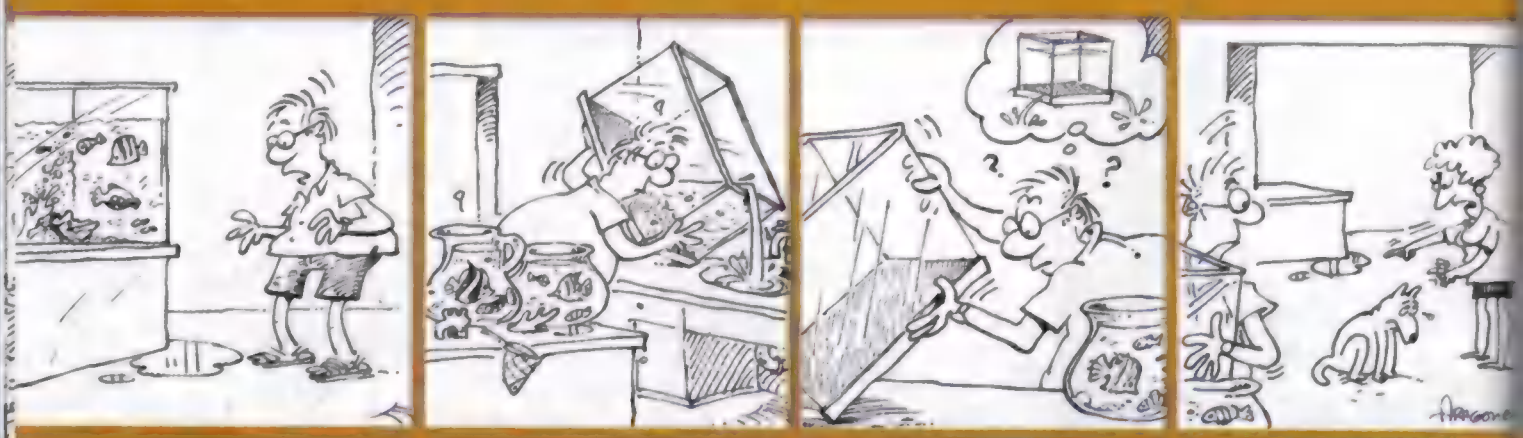
"You're not my real "mom/dad" will now be considered a legitimate argument.

Sergio Aragonés presents A MAD LOOK

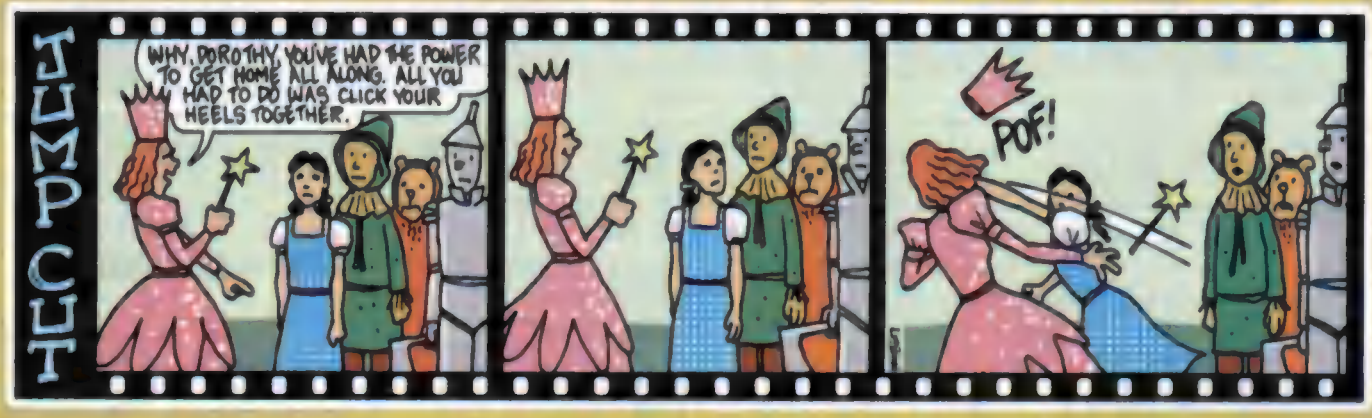

AT PETS
VET
TAXIDERMIST
DISPOS
PET SHOP
HELP WANTED
HELP WANTED
HELP WANTED
PET SH

ADOPTION DEPT
HUMANE SOCIETY
BEWARE OF DOG





THE STRIP CLUB



PAUL GILLIGAN

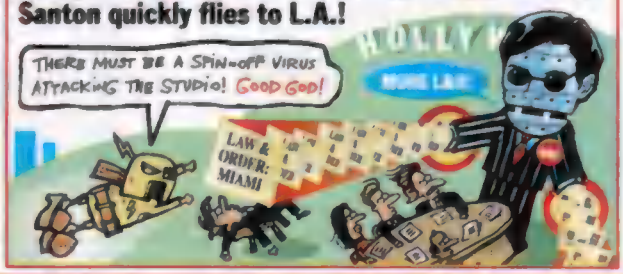
YOUR ONLY DEFENSE AGAINST THE ZEITGEIST!

THE HERO SANTON!

"Law & Ordered"

Tuesday night. Our hero, having just defeated yet another inexplicable pop culture phenomenon (UGG boots), finally sits down to relax and watch his fav '80s show, "MacGyver." But...

No "MacGyver"? Shaken, Santon searches TiVo. Nada. All he finds are 125 "Law & Order" spin-offs. He waits one second, breathes, and checks again. Suddenly there are 132 "Law & Order" spin-offs! Wait, that's 7 new "Law & Orders" in 1 second?! Santon quickly flies to L.A.!



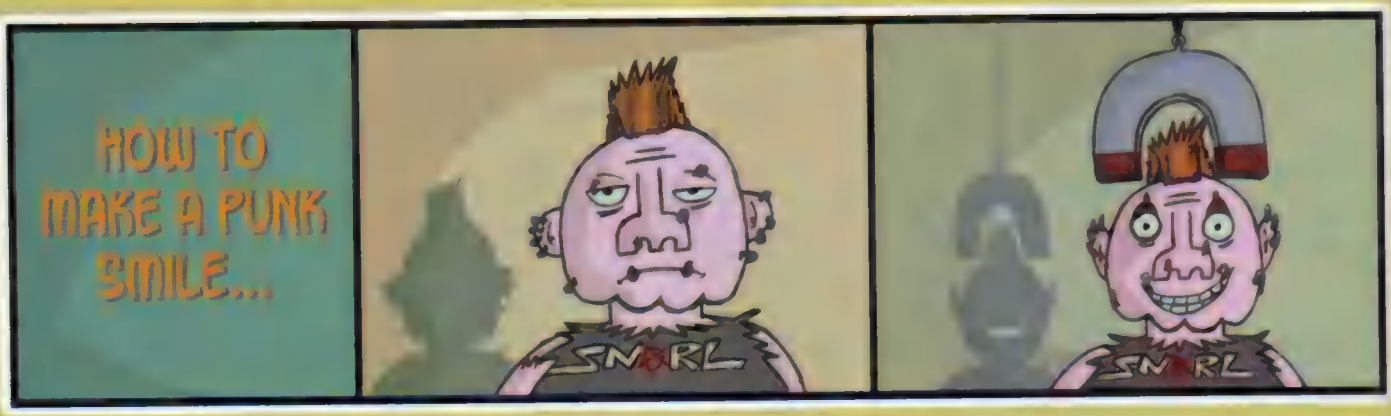
The evil NBC Programming Bot has released a computer virus causing "Law & Order" spin-offs to duplicate at the rate of 7 per second. Within 3 hours, all the Earth's television sets will explode! Santon has to think quickly!

I'VE ASKED CBS TO RELEASE A C.S.I. SPIN-OFF VIRUS !! CHUCK OUT THIS ACTION SEQUENCE!
Action sequence created by hundreds of CGI artists!
MORE LAW
MORE LAW
C.S.I.
LAW & ORDER

Santon's plan works as the CBS and NBC robots destroy each other, leaving hours of room on the schedule for...

But soon Santon hungers for more "MacGyver." So he goes to Hollywood and spreads a "MacGyver" virus.

DON ASMUSSEN



PONDERING THE REALLY MEANINGFUL STUFF...

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT HUMANS ARE MORE EVOLVED THAN DOGS. BUT YOU MAY ASK, "HOW DO WE KNOW?" THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN PONDERING...

FACT #1: WHEN INJURED, PEOPLE DO NOT CHEW AT THEIR WOUNDS, THEREBY NEEDING PROTECTIVE WEAR.

ADVANTAGE: HUMANS

FACT #2: PEOPLE DON'T BURY IMPORTANT THINGS IN THE BACKYARD.

ADVANTAGE: HUMANS

FACT #3: DOGS NEVER ANSWER THEIR PHONES DURING ROMANTIC MEALS.

ADVANTAGE: DOGS

FACT #4: NO DOG HAS EVER BEEN SUCKERED INTO BUYING ONE OF THOSE SHARPER IMAGE IONIC AIR PURIFIERS.

ADVANTAGE: DOGS

FACT #5: HUMANS RARELY, IF EVER, EAT THEIR OWN WASTE.

ADVANTAGE: HUMANS

CONCLUSION: 3 TO 2 HUMANS WIN... BUT JUST BARELY.

UTTERLY, COMPLETELY, TOTALLY UNDEFEATABLE*... HE'S

FANTABULAMAN

*YES, REALLY.

NO CHALLENGE HAS EVER DEFEATED OUR HERO. BUT WHEN *TIME ITSELF* IS TURNED AGAINST HIM, WILL FANTABULAMAN'S WINNING STREAK AT LAST COME UNDONE?

A VORTEX! TIME IS LOSING ITS STRUCTURE!!

SOON EVERYTHING WILL BE GONE— EVEN ME!

TRAPPED IN AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE VOID, FANTABULAMAN SIZES UP HIS SITUATION.

SOME JERK HAS OBVIOUSLY TRAPPED AND ROTATED A BLACK HOLE TO TAP INTO THE ENERGY NEEDED TO CAUSE QUANTUM FLUCTUATIONS IN GENERAL RELATIVITY, ALLOWING TRAVEL FASTER THAN LIGHT AND THUS TIME REVERSAL, ENABLING HIM TO ERASE THE UNIVERSE BY MESSING WITH THE MOMENT OF CREATION, A.K.A. THE "BIG BANG."

SOMEWHERE/NOWHERE, AT THE EXACT START OF TIME, WE MEET THE EVIL CHRONOMETRIC VILLAIN KNOWN AS THE **CLOCKMASTER**, A.K.A., "SOME JERK"!

NOW THAT I'VE CAPTURED THE BIG BANG, NEITHER FANTABULAMAN NOR THE UNIVERSE WILL EVER EXIST!

NYEH, NYEH, F-MAN!

BIG BANG IN A JAR

BUT THEN—

FANTABULAMAN!? BUT HOW?

BACK-UP FILE.

"BACK-UP FILE"?

YEP. I BACK UP THE UNIVERSE ON MY EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE EVERY NIGHT... JUST IN CASE.

"EVERY NIGHT"? BUT I WASN'T EVEN *HERE* LAST NI—

EXACTLY.

NEXT: ALIEN INVASION!!

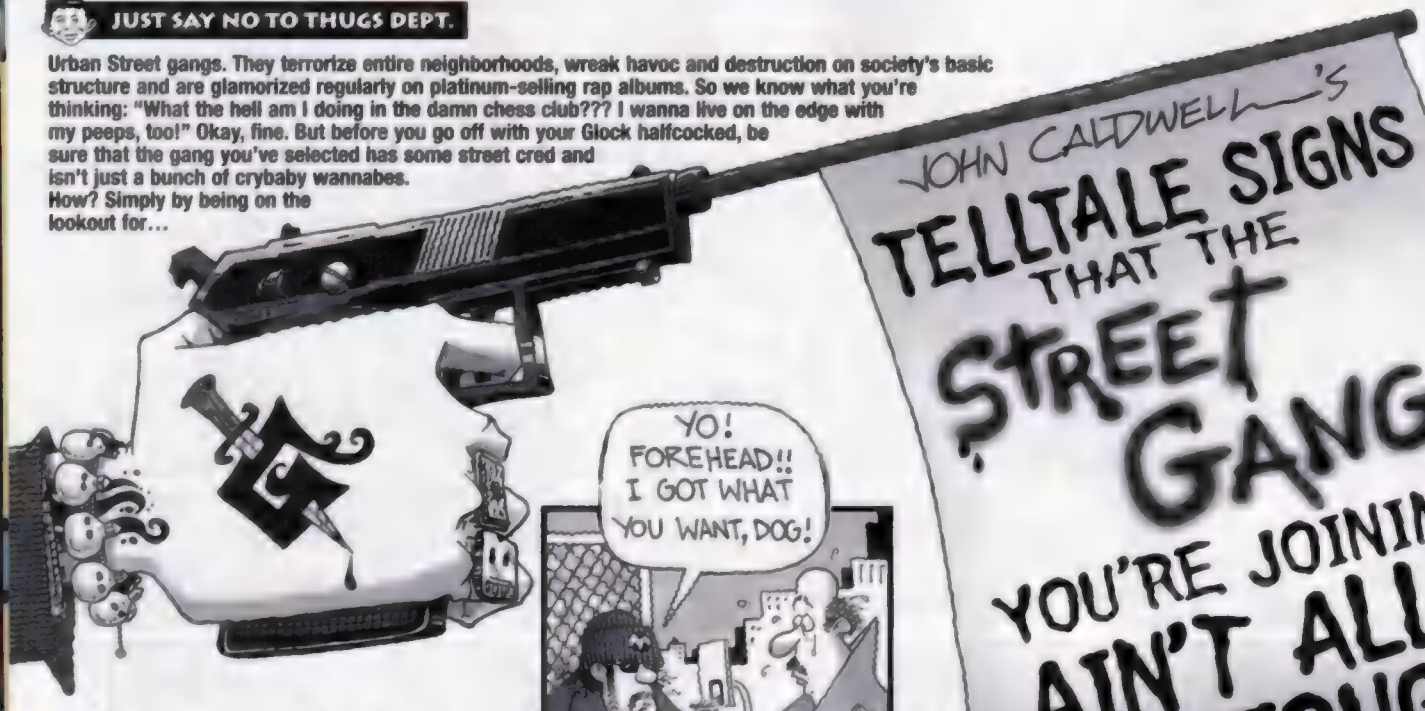
TED RALL

JUST SAY NO TO THUGS DEPT.

Urban Street gangs. They terrorize entire neighborhoods, wreak havoc and destruction on society's basic structure and are glamorized regularly on platinum-selling rap albums. So we know what you're thinking: "What the hell am I doing in the damn chess club??? I wanna live on the edge with my peeps, too!" Okay, fine. But before you go off with your Glock halfcocked, be sure that the gang you've selected has some street cred and isn't just a bunch of crybaby wannabes.
How? Simply by being on the lookout for...

JOHN CALDWELL'S TELLTALE SIGNS THAT THE STREET GANG YOU'RE JOINING AIN'T ALL THAT TOUGH

ARTIST AND WRITER:
JOHN CALDWELL



The only "drug" activity that funds their operation is selling street level Minoxidil

For so-called "hardcore thugs," they win more than their share of ribbons at the county fair

They can't seem to go more than ten minutes without a "gang hug"

The only game where they "got game" is Yahtzee

What they call "gangbanging" would more aptly be described as the old "ring and run"

The "fallen brothers" who are always spoken about in hushed, reverent tones are actually just guys who've been maced by mall security and grounded by their parents

When they preach about the importance of protecting their turf, there's always a strong emphasis placed on grub killer

Their idea of bling? Armfuls of counterfeit Timexes

In law enforcement circles, the gang is commonly referred to as "those fat guys on the Vespas"

BWAAAAA''GH!!!

POLICE

102

PHWAAAA4... PHWAT PURT PHIT

HEUS TU! IPSE TU, DUDE!

They call themselves "The Latin Kings" only because of their above-average grades in Latin

Their lone graffiti activity is limited to making grammar and spelling corrections

THAT'S "I" BEFORE "E" EXCEPT AFTER "C", MR. CATMAN 138!

STRAIGHTEN HIM OUT, G!

The one hand sign in their arsenal stands for "Bake Sale Today!"

OUR TARTS R PHAT YO!

INSTANT COMA'S GONNA GET YOU DEPT.

Lately, it's been impossible to avoid all the stories in the news about living wills and health care proxies. To make it, you'd have to be in a coma or something! And one issue was never addressed — what exact stipulations and requests can you include in your living will? To find out, we interviewed seven people to see what arrangements they had made. If you should ever suffer serious end of accident and end up in the "vegetable state," you'll be glad you paid attention — READ on!

WHAT'S IN YOUR LIVING WILL?

Under no circumstances should I be given artificial nutrition or hydration, until I've lost those stubborn fifteen extra pounds.

– Roz Slocumberg, Real Estate Agent

In the event it seems inevitable that I am to have chronic "Bed Head," call it a day.

– Lady Musafah, Owner-Operator, Lady Says Salon

If, at the time of my incapacitation, there is some technology that now allows vegetative folks to enjoy an active sex life, keep me hooked up!

– Dom "The Meat" Cappicola, Laborer

Remove me from any artificial means of living if it requires having ANYTHING, EVER, stuck up my ass.

– Bud Festerd, Firearms Repair

Continue life support indefinitely as I have, up to this point, never lived a dignified life anyhow.

– Denny Bohnar, Jockey's Union Representative

It is my wish to remain living until my bedsore count has exceeded the current record holder in the Guinness Book.

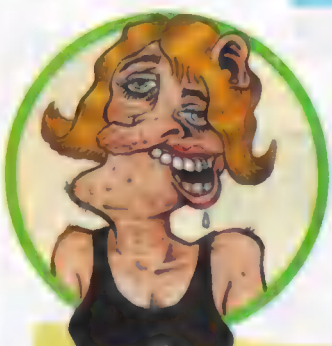
– Ace Wilcot, Professional Golfer

If rendered brain dead, I wish not to remain alive, yet not to be unplugged. Rather, I request to be dropped off the roof of The Ed Sullivan Theater by a celebrity guest during a Late Show with David Letterman taping.

– Butchie McTague, Postal Employee

If no one is willing to wax my unibrow, by all means, tug the plug.

– Mavis Crampanato, Customer Support Associate



I wish to be kept alive — however, photographs and videos of my predicament shall only be allowed up to the time my face becomes even more lopsided and drooly than usual.

– Jessica Lerpit, Certified Nail Enhancement Technician

Maintain life-preserving measures as long as it takes for my spouse to admit the trampoline on the patio was a bad idea.

– Betty Wright, Homemaker/Avon Representative

If it looks like I have a decent buzz on from all the meds, continue life support.

– Tito Bondi, Musician

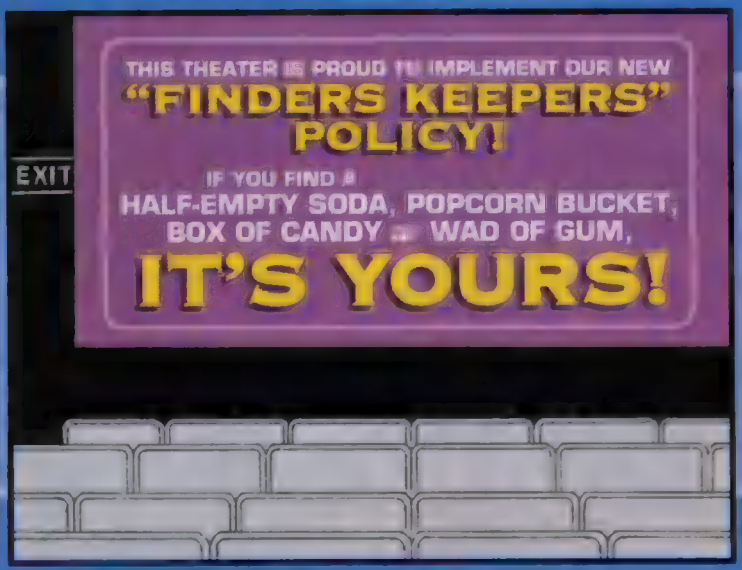
I will accept indefinite feeding efforts, providing the tube can accommodate Ben & Jerry's Chunky Monkey, the occasional barbecued rib, and maybe some Chuckles.

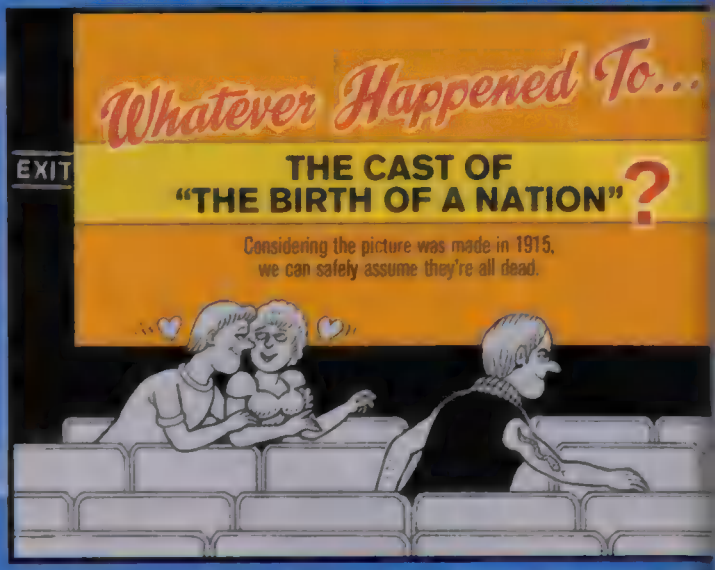
– Patty-Anne Smeltz, Licensed Practical Nurse

ARTIST: TOM BUNK WRITER: TERESA BURNS PARKHURST

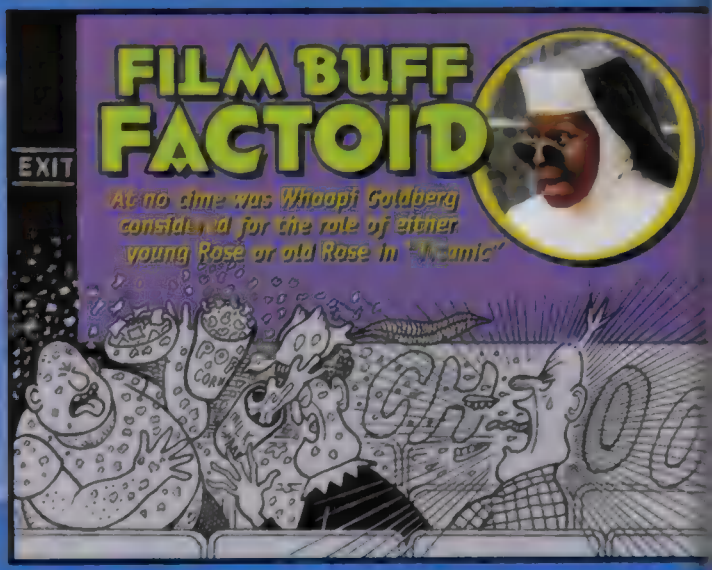
PRE-MOVIE

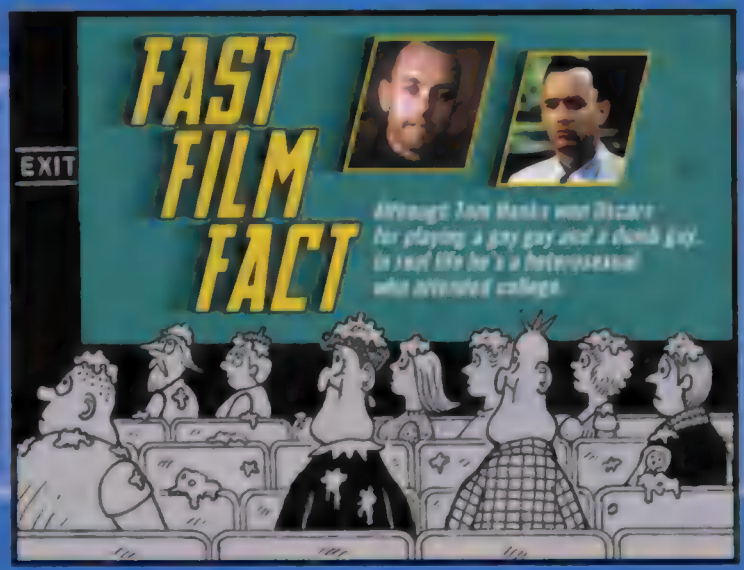
Ah, a night at the movies! The modern multiplex experience features stadium seating, Dolby multi-channel sound, superwide screens and ultra-sharp projection technology. But before you get to that, you're forced to spend 20 minutes looking at boring factoids and moronic "quizzes" on grainy, washed-out slides that aren't up to the quality of your Aunt Thelma's vacation pics taken at Lake George in 1958! If only they were more like these...

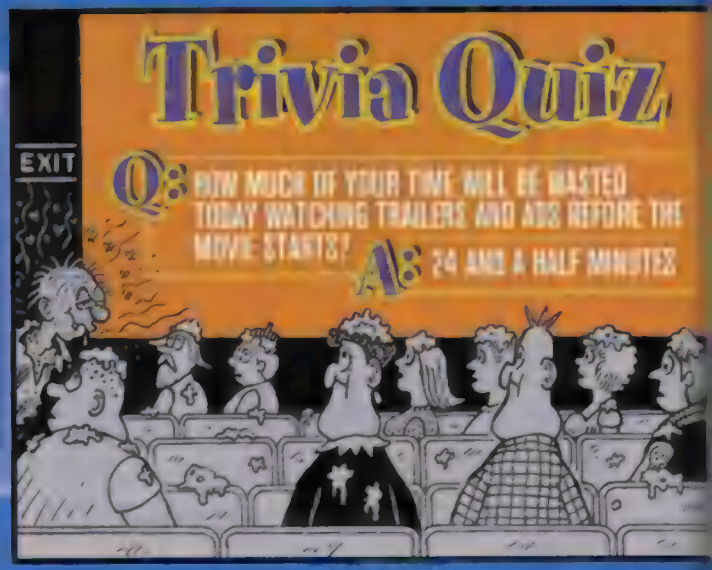

EXIT
THIS THEATER IS PROUD TO IMPLEMENT OUR NEW
"FINDERS KEEPERS" POLICY!
IF YOU FIND A
HALF-EMPTY SODA, POPCORN BUCKET, BOX OF CANDY ... WAD OF GUM,
IT'S YOURS!


EXIT
Whatever Happened To...
THE CAST OF "THE BIRTH OF A NATION"?
Considering the picture was made in 1915, we can safely assume they're all dead.

EXIT
WANT TO REACH A HANDFUL OF LONELY PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY PAY ATTENTION TO THESE SLIDES?
ADVERTISE!
CALL 1-555-FILMCRUD
AH AH




EXIT
FAST FILM FACT
Although Tom Hanks won Oscars for playing a gay guy and a dumb guy, in real life he's a heterosexual who attended college.


EXIT
Trivia Quiz
Q: HOW MUCH OF YOUR TIME WILL BE WASTED TODAY WATCHING TRAILERS AND ADS BEFORE THE MOVIE STARTS?
A: 24 AND A HALF MINUTES

ARTIST: AL JAFFEE

SCREENS WE'D LIKE TO SEE

EXIT

MOVIE TRIVIA TIDBIT

THERE IS NO LEGAL REASON WHY O.J. SIMPSON CAN'T REPRISE HIS ROLE AS NORDBERG IF THEY DECIDE TO MAKE "NAKED GUN 4"

EXIT

BUY Coca-Cola

(IF THIS SCREEN STAYS ON FOR LONGER THAN 1/20TH OF A SECOND, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR THEATER MANAGER)

EXIT

AFTER THE MOVIE, GO TO FRED'S FUTON HUT

AND PRESENT YOUR TICKET STUB!

You won't get a discount or anything. Fred's hobby is collecting movie ticket stubs.

EXIT

"PICTURE" PUZZLE

UNSCRAMBLE THE LETTERS OF THIS MOVIE TITLE:

T E

EXIT

OSCAR MOMENT...

MARCIA GAY HARDEN WINS THE 2000 BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS AWARD FOR "POLLOCK."

DON'T TELL HER WE DON'T KNOW ANYONE WHO SAW THAT FILM.

EXIT

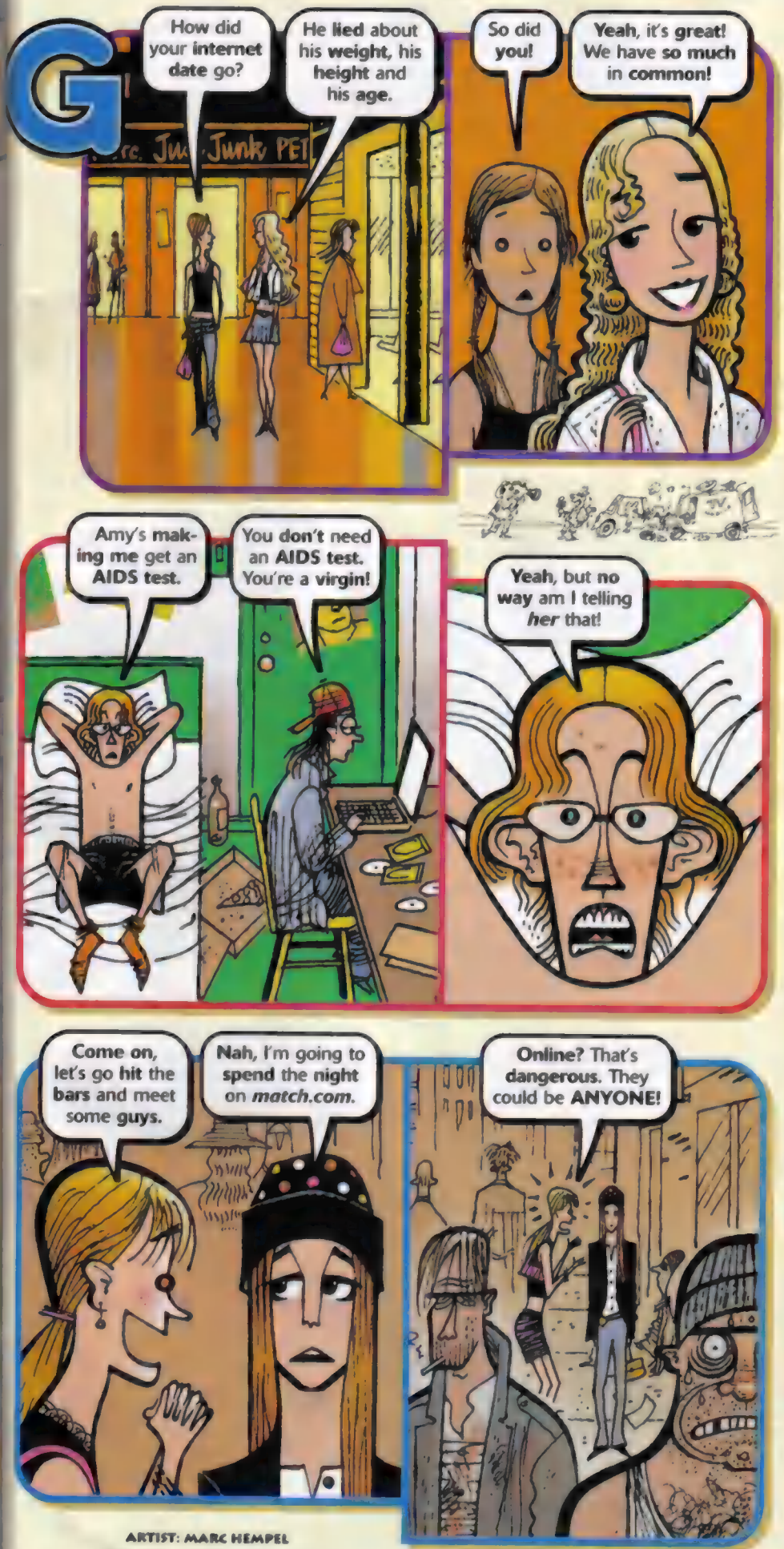
GREAT MOMENTS IN CINEMA HISTORY!

1921 – USHERS IN MOBILE, ALABAMA BEAT TO DEATH A MAN WHO HAD BROUGHT HIS OWN POPCORN INTO THE THEATER... YOU FOLLOW?

The MAD WORLD of... DATiN

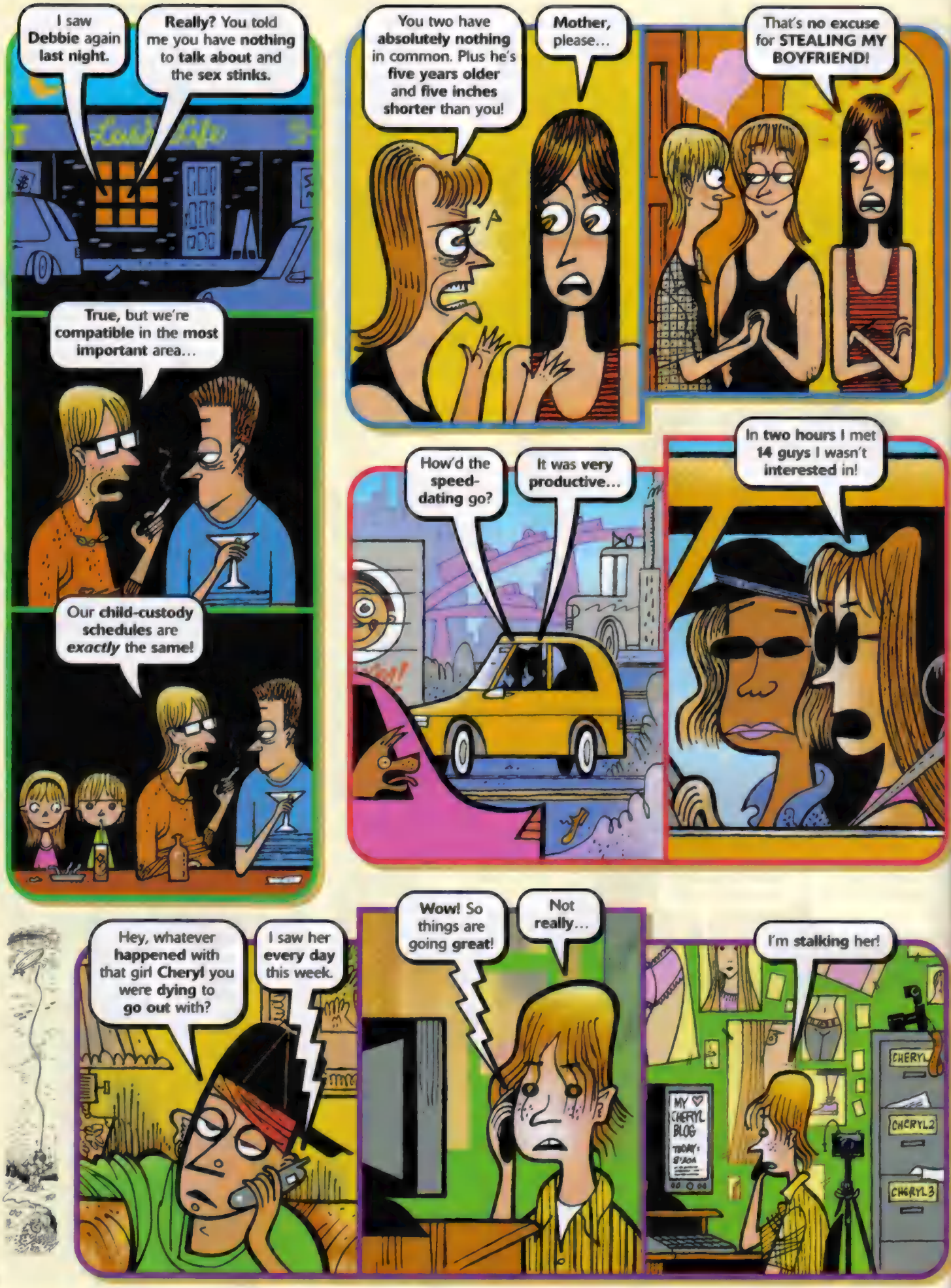
I (-crackle crackle-) can't (-crackle crackle-) you (-crackle crackle-) anymore.
What'd Suzie want?
I'm not sure – but I think we broke up while breaking up!

I offered to split the check.
So did I.
He let me, so I dumped him because he was cheap.
He wouldn't let me, so I dumped him because he wouldn't treat me like an equal.
Guys just don't get it!


How did your internet date go?
He lied about his weight, his height and his age.
So did you!
Yeah, it's great! We have so much in common!
Amy's making me get an AIDS test.
You don't need an AIDS test. You're a virgin!
Yeah, but no way am I telling her that!
Come on, let's go hit the bars and meet some guys.
Nah, I'm going to spend the night on match.com.
Online? That's dangerous. They could be ANYONE!
Come on. Let's do it.
I don't want to. I've never done anything like this before.
If you loved me, you'd say yes.
But if anyone finds out, my reputation will be ruined.
I'll still respect you after it's over. I promise.
All right. But just this once.
Two tickets for Must Love Dogs, please!

ARTIST: MARC HEMPEL

WRITER: STAN SINBERG


I saw Debbie again last night.
Really? You told me you have nothing to talk about and the sex stinks.
True, but we're compatible in the most important area...
Our child-custody schedules are exactly the same!
You two have absolutely nothing in common. Plus he's five years older and five inches shorter than you!
Mother, please...
That's no excuse for STEALING MY BOYFRIEND!
How'd the speed-dating go?
It was very productive...
In two hours I met 14 guys I wasn't interested in!
Hey, whatever happened with that girl Cheryl you were dying to go out with?
I saw her every day this week.
Wow! So things are going great!
Not really...
I'm stalking her!
MY ♡ CHERYL BLOG
CHERYL
CHERYL2
CHERYL3

Hot fun in the summer. Son. It's...

MONROE and... SUMMER SCHOOL!

AWESOME! I'VE BEEN WAITING ALL YEAR FOR THIS!
OH, YOU'RE NOT GOING. WE ARE! WE JUST NEED TO DROP YOU OFF ON THE WAY FOR YOUR FIRST DAY OF SUMMER SCHOOL!
HA! HA! HA!

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE GOING TO WET WILLY'S WITHOUT ME.
DON'T SWEAT IT, KIDDO, I'LL TAKE SOME PICTURES OF teen girls FOR YOU.
GAINES HIGH

ARTIST: BILL WRAY WRITER: ANTHONY BARBIERI

SORRY I'M LATE. I'M OUT OF PRACTICE OPENING LOCKERS FROM THE INSIDE.
JUST DON'T MAKE IT A HABIT. LET'S START BY GOING AROUND THE ROOM AND FINDING OUT WHERE ALL OF YOU SCREWED UP.
DYLAN. I PUNCHED TEDDY ROOSEVELT WHEN HE VISITED OUR HISTORY CLASS.
MY NAME IS KEVIN K. I LIKE TO BURN STUFF.
I'M WALTER, I SIGNED UP BECAUSE I JUST LOVE SCHOOL.
I'M MONROE AND I FAILED PHYS. ED.
WHAT?!
ISN'T THIS NICER THAN SITTING AROUND THAT CLASSROOM?
I FIND THE LACK OF STRUCTURE DISCONCERTING.
I'M NERVOUS BEING THIS CLOSE TO THE TRACK. THAT WAS COACH LYNCH'S HOUSE OF PAIN!
IT'S KIND OF HARD TO CARVE YOUR INITIALS IN DIRT. I WAS MAKING GOOD PROGRESS ON MY DESK.
YEAH, AND EVERYTHING IS WAY TOO DAMP TO CATCH FIRE!!
OKAY THEN, HEADING BACK INSIDE...
I'LL BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU GUYS. I DON'T EXACTLY HAVE A GAME PLAN HERE.
WE'RE HOME, KIDDO! WHAT A TIME. KID, YOUR MOM IS WET AND WILD.
THOSE WATER-SLIDES RIPPED OFF MY BIKINI FASTER THAN AN IRISH SAILOR.
SUDDENLY I'M NOT SO SAD I MISSED IT.
I'M GOING UPSTAIRS. THAT WAVE POOL OPENED UP MY STITCHES.
SO, HOW WAS BUMMER SCHOOL?
NOT SO BAD, REALLY. MR. KOEHORST HAS BEEN TEACHING US ALL ABOUT HOW SCREWED UP LIFE CAN BE.
IF THAT'S HIS LESSON PLAN, YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE HOME-SCHOOLED.
WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE DOING? READING? SINCE WHEN DO YOU READ?

WHAT CAN I SAY? I'M NO ATHLETE. BESIDES I'M NO GOOD AT SHOWERING WITH OTHER DUDES.
IT'S REALLY VERY SIMPLE, YOU JUST LET THE WARM, SOAPY WATER RUN ALL OVER YOUR BODY LIKE IT'S MAPLE SYRUP AND...
Er... THANK YOU, WALTER. OKAY, LOOK, I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE ANY MORE THAN YOU GUYS DO. SO HOW ABOUT WE CHUCK THESE LESSON PLANS AND GO OUTSIDE?
AND ONCE WE'RE OUTSIDE WE CAN BURN STUFF.
LET'S JUST START WITH GOING OUTSIDE.
WHY DON'T YOU TEACH US ABOUT YOURSELF? AT LEAST WE CAN LEARN HOW TO AVOID BECOMING YOU.
OK, YOU'VE GOT A POINT. LET THE LESSON BEGIN! MY NAME IS MISTER KOEHORST AND HERE'S WHY I DESPISE LIFE.
NOW HE'S SINGING MY SONG.
THOSE WHO CAN'T DO, TEACH AND THOSE THAT CAN'T TEACH, SUBSTITUTE TEACH AND THOSE THAT CAN'T SUBSTITUTE TEACH, TEACH SUMMER SCHOOL AND THOSE THAT CAN'T TEACH SUMMER SCHOOL, SUBSTITUTE TEACH SUMMER SCHOOL. ANY QUESTIONS?
FIRE
WOW. YOU'RE A MESS. WHEN DID IT ALL FALL APART?
FOR ME IT WAS A LITTLE PROBLEM WITH CLASSIC COKE, AND I DON'T MEAN THE SODA. I'M TALKIN' BOOGER SUGAR, COLUMBIAN COCOA PUFFS.
LET'S GO BACK TO 1983...
SSSSSSSS
HOMEWORK. GOLF MAGAZINE. MR. K. WAS GONNA GO PRO UNTIL HE MET A LITTLE GUY NAMED JOHNNY SNOWFLAKE.
JOHNNY SNOWFLAKE?!? THE YAYO?!? BOOGER SUGAR?!? I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THIS.
COME ON, IT'S SUMMER. AMERICAN IDOL IS FINISHED FOR THE SEASON. THIS IS THE ONLY ENTERTAINMENT I'VE GOT.
OKAY, YOU CONVINCED ME. EVERYONE SAW. I SHOWED SOME INTEREST IN THE KID'S WELL-BEING. GLAD THAT'S OVER.

THREE WEEKS LATER...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S MR. KOEHORST'S LAST CLASS.
I HOPE HE MAKES MORE OF THAT DUTCH STRUDEL!
MAYBE HE'LL LET US ALL PUNCH HIM IN THE FACE AGAIN!
THAT WAS SWEET!
FORGET ALL THAT. I WANT HIM TO FINISH THE STORY ABOUT THAT BODY BURIED IN OREGON.
YEAH!
THAT'S RIGHT...
COACH LYNCH! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IT'S MY CLASS. THAT OTHER MOOK WAS A SUB WHILE I TOOK SOME "MENTAL HEALTH DAYS."
BUT WE WERE ALMOST DONE WITH THE CLASS.
YEAH. BUT IF I SHOW UP AT LEAST ONE OF THE DAYS, UNION RULES SAY IT'S TECHNICALLY STILL MY CLASS AND I STILL GET PAID.
CHA-CHING!
WHOA. SWEET SNAKE MOVE!
COACH
THANKS DYLAN. BUT WE'RE NOT HERE TO LEARN ABOUT LOOPHOLES. WE'RE HERE FOR ONE LAST DAY OF YOURS TRULY — THE COACH! ARE YOU READY, LADIES?
I'M OUT.
RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
LET ME JUST GRAB MY KINDLING PENCILS.
OKAY THEN.
FINE. YOU OTHERS CAN BEAT IT SO LONG AS YOU KEEP YOUR MOUTHS SHUT ABOUT MY SUB-SCAM. BUT, MONROE, YOU FAILED MY CLASS. YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
HOW DO YOU KNOW I WON'T TELL?
'CAUSE I HAVE YOU NEXT SEMESTER, TOO. NOW, MIGHT AS WELL GET YOU STARTED.
OH, DEAR LORD! NOT THE TRACK!
THAT'S NOT THE TRACK, BOY. THAT'S COACH HORACE LYNCH'S HOUSE OF PAIN!!!
GULP!
SEE YOU NEXT FALL, MONROE!

A NEW MONTHLY READER SERVICE SECTION

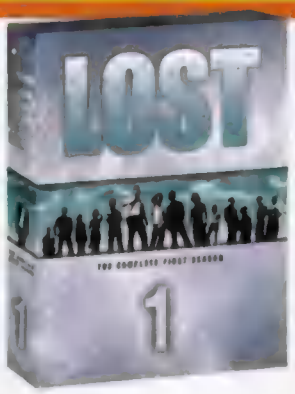
GO FETCH!

THE LATEST STUFF YOU MAY (OR MAY NOT) WANT TO CHASE DOWN!

DVD

LOST: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON

Buena Vista Home Entertainment • September 6



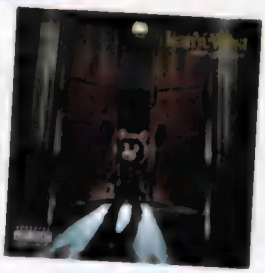
The Hype: Stranded on a tropical island after their plane crashes, a group of castaways must learn to survive in their new home — as well as avoid the gigantic *something* crashing through the trees and determine whether they really are alone.

The Snipe: *Now that fans will be able to pore over every detail, every hint, every tease...chances are they still won't come up with any answers.*

MUSIC

LATE REGISTRATION
KANYE WEST

Roc-A-Fella • August 30



The Hype: The producer-turned-dapper rapper releases the follow-up to his Grammy-winning, star-making debut, featuring guests like Adam Levine from Maroon 5 and Oscar-winner Jamie Foxx.

The Snipe: *West has had a golden touch lately — and if he's putting out an album with the guy who sang "She Will Be Loved" and the guy who starred in "Booty Call," he's gonna need it.*

MOVIE

THE DUKES OF HAZZARD

Warner Bros. Pictures • August 5

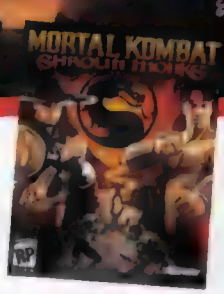
The Hype: "Good ol' boy" cousins Bo and Luke Duke, with the help of their eye-catching cousin Daisy and moonshine-running Uncle Jesse, try to save the family farm from being destroyed by corrupt commissioner Boss Hogg.

The Snipe: *There's Oscar buzz already — from the retarded.*

GAME

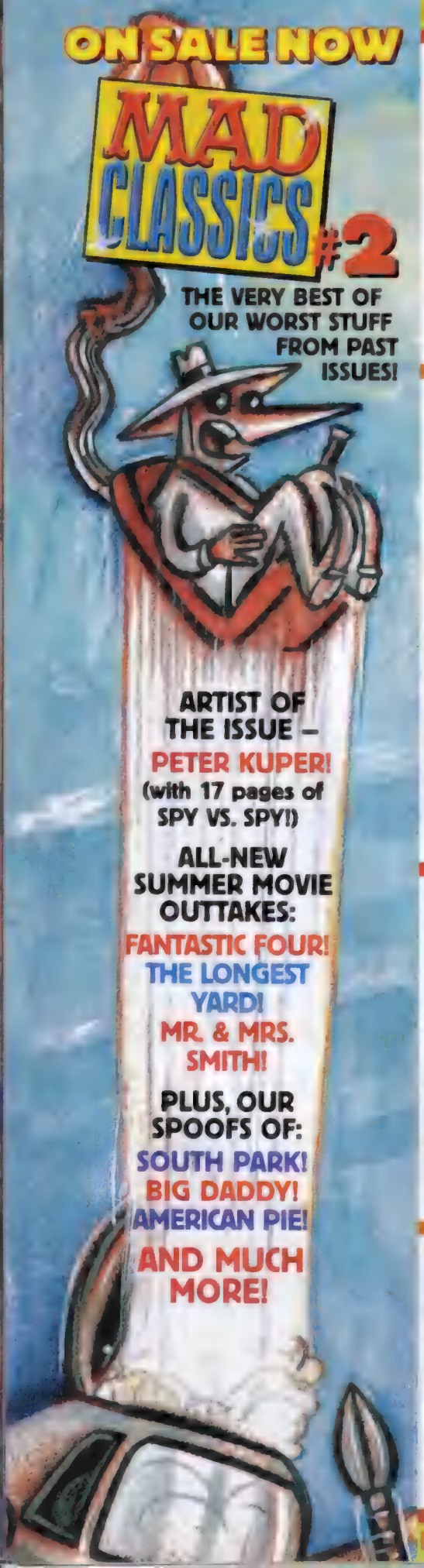
MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS

PS2, Xbox • Midway • September



The Hype: Melt enemies in acid pits, impale them on spiked ceilings and hang them on hooks. Hurl an opponent into a spiked wall and leap from their impaled body to a higher area!

The Snipe: *Or you could just date Lynndie England.*

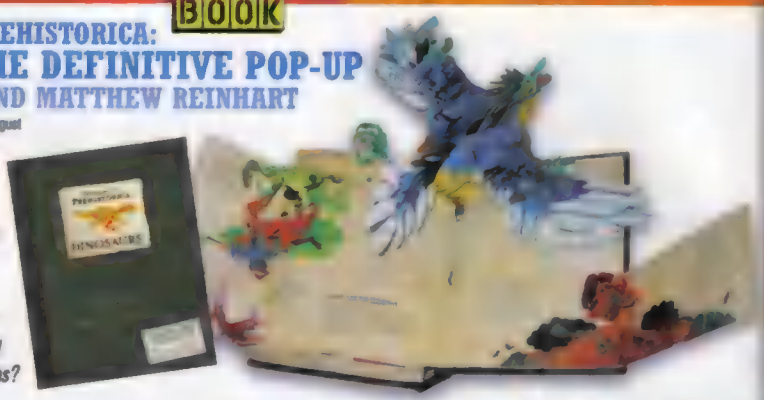

ON SALE NOW
MAD CLASSICS #2
THE VERY BEST OF OUR WORST STUFF FROM PAST ISSUES!
ARTIST OF THE ISSUE – PETER KUPER! (with 17 pages of SPY VS. SPY!)
ALL-NEW SUMMER MOVIE OUTTAKES:
FANTASTIC FOUR!
THE LONGEST YARD!
MR. & MRS. SMITH!
PLUS, OUR SPOOFS OF:
SOUTH PARK!
BIG DADDY!
AMERICAN PIE!
AND MUCH MORE!

BOOK

ENCYCLOPEDIA PREHISTORICA: DINOSAURS: THE DEFINITIVE POP-UP

ROBERT SABUDA AND MATTHEW REINHART

Candlewick Press • $26.99 • [illegible] pages • August



The Hype: With more than 35 pop-ups and a ton of facts, this book is a window into the world of these extinct creatures and their 180 million-year existence on Earth.

The Snipe: *A book about old, scaly creatures? Where the hell is the pop-up of Michael Douglas?*

GAME

MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP: CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

PS2 • Atari, Inc. • September

The Hype: In your quest [illegible] become a legendary graffiti artist, you realize that an oppressive mayor has a stranglehold on the city of New Radius, and you must use all of your high-wire graffiti talents to expose him and set the city free.

The Snipe: *"High-wire graffiti"? Couldn't you just write something on the bathroom wall?*

BOOK

THE ROUGH GUIDE TO HEAVY METAL

ESSI BERELIAN

Rough Guides • $26.99 • 400 pages • September

The Hype: With more than 300 artist biographies, band stories and photographs, this is (according to the publisher) the ultimate brain-warping Heavy Metal A to Z.

The Snipe: *Well let's see... "A"? AC/DC! Check! "M"? Metallica! Excellent! "T"?...What? No Tito Jackson? The self-proclaimed King of Metal? This is an outrage!*

DVD

GHOSTBUSTERS & GHOSTBUSTERS 2

Columbia TriStar Home Video • August 2

The Hype: Together for the first time, this new giftset includes the original film, sequel and a deluxe Collector's Scrapbook. Starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Rick Moranis and Harold Ramis. When it comes to supernaturally classic comedy, who you gonna call?

The Snipe: *In answer [illegible] the trivia question now going through your mind, the black guy was Ernie Hudson.*

MUSIC

PLANS

DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE

Atlantic Records • September 20

The Hype: Seth Cohen from *The O.C.*'s favorite band makes its major label debut. Produced by guitarist/keyboardist Chris Walla, with all songs written by frontman Ben Gibbard, the entire album was recorded in a farmhouse studio.

The Snipe: *The O.C. made two things very popular — UGG boots and Death Cab for Cutie. Between the two, we'll take the band — those boots make our feet super-sweaty.*

GAME

BURNOUT REVENGE

PS2, Xbox • Electronic Arts • September

The Hype: Now every vehicle on the road is in play and a potential target — or weapon. Ram traffic into your rivals, slam cars into vicious combo-based pile-ups and lay waste to everything in sight.

The Snipe: *Sounds like your regular, everyday, morning commute in Baghdad.*

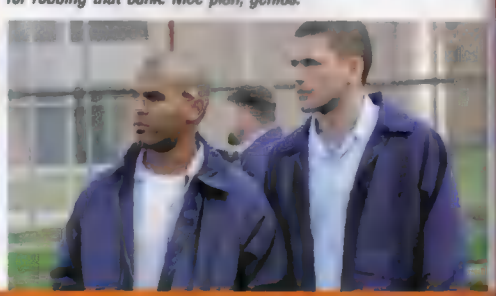
TV

PRISON BREAK

FOX • Mondays, 9pm • Premieres August 29

The Hype: Michael Scofield holds up a bank to get himself incarcerated alongside his brother, on death row for a murder Michael is convinced he didn't commit. Once inside, he hatches an elaborate plan to break his brother out and prove his innocence.

The Snipe: *Hey Mikey, even if you succeed in proving your brother's innocence, you'll still have to serve your own sentence for robbing that bank. Nice plan, genius.*



Celebrate the Season with

The Simpsons Christmas Village

THEY LIGHT UP

The **First-Ever** Simpsons village exclusively from Hawthorne!

"742 Evergreen Terrace" measures approx. 7" high and includes FREE Homer Simpson figurine

Celebrate the holidays with Springfield's most famous family…*The Simpsons*. Homer's in the decorating spirit and Moe is serving up plenty of frosty Duff Beer.

Make your Christmas merrier with *The Simpsons Christmas Village*. Mmmm! The Simpsons—the longest running prime-time series in history. With its heartwarmingly offbeat cast of characters and special brand of irreverent humor, The Simpsons has captured the hearts of fans the world over. Your holidays will ring with laughter with the entire Simpsons family, Apu, Moe and more!

collectiblestoday.com Home of Hawthorne Village and All Things Collectible

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Begin your collection with "742 Evergreen Terrace" and *FREE* Homer figurine. This delightful holiday sculpture and **FREE** figurine can be yours for three easy payments of just $19.98*. You will be billed your first payment before they are shipped.

A Comical Collection…an Incredible Value!

After "742 Evergreen Terrace," Charter Subscribers can build this village with more sculptures—at the same low price—and **FREE** figurines sent about every other month. You can cancel at any time simply by notifying us. Your second issue will be the "Kwik-E-Mart" with **FREE** "Bart" figurine. Strong demand is expected. So please don't wait to order. *Send no money now.* Just complete and mail the coupon today.

FREE! Three Figurines, Simpsons Family Car and 6-pc. Light Set—$60 value!

Hawthorne Village®

9210 N. MARYLAND STREET, NILES, IL 60714-1322

Limited-time Offer—Please Respond Promptly

Yes! Please enter my Charter Subscription for the illuminated *The Simpsons Christmas Village* collection, starting with "742 Evergreen Terrace" as described in this announcement. I need **SEND NO MONEY NOW.**

*Plus $7.99 shipping and service. Illinois residents add sales tax. Pending credit approval. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Signature

Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

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City State Zip

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Certificate of Authenticity & 365-day Guarantee

IT'S MAD'S STUPID SUMMER SUBSCRIPTION RACE!

YES, NOW EVEN A LOSER LIKE YOU CAN BE A BIG WINNER!

The subscriber who gets the most people to subscribe to MAD will WIN:

- A 3-day/2-night trip to the Big Apple! (Yippie!)
- A ridiculous tour of the MAD office! (Gak!)
- A box o' MAD junk! (Big Deal!)
- A game system and a Spy Vs. Spy video game! (Fa! Fa!)
- Cash, cash, cash! (Now we're talkin'!)

PLUS... 20 second-place winners will receive a game system and a Spy Vs. Spy video game!

YOU could be the winner (in the loosest sense of the word)!

So start alienating your friends and loved ones by bugging them to subscribe TODAY!

For full contest details, visit madmag.com/freetrip

DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH!

GAME

MADDEN NFL 06

PS2, Xbox, GameCube, PC-CD • Electronic Arts • August

The Hype: Experience the life of an NFL player with NFL Superstar Mode. This entirely new single-player mode allows you to experience the life of an NFL player by earning one of more than 60 personas ranging from MVP to Movie Star.

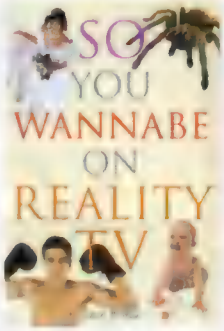
The Snipe: *Of course, if you were really a professional athlete, you'd be a multi-millionaire steroid addict spending your free time at strip clubs, not playing video games.*

BOOK

SO YOU WANNABE ON REALITY TV

JACK BENZA

Allworth Press • $19.95 • 224 pages • August



The Hype: An expert reality show contestant tells all, including acing the auditioning and casting process, making an audition tape, preparing for the physical and mental test, passing the background check and winning over producers.

The Snipe: *Didn't know you had to go through all this effort just to eat pigs' testicles or to compete next to a naked Richard Hatch, did you?*

BOOK

DIGITAL PHOTO MAGIC

DK Publishing • $19.99 • 72 pages • September

The Hype: Using easy step-by-step instructions to explain techniques (like how to cut a background or creating ghosts) — this book shows kids the magic they can create using their digital camera.

The Snipe: *In other words — Hey kids, now it's easier than ever to digitally show your teacher's head coming out of a horse's ass!*

DVD

DAVE CHAPPELLE: FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...

Columbia TriStar Home Video • August 16

The Hype: Chappelle lets loose on such topics as black celebs, what it's like to have raunchy fans approach him while he's at Disneyland with his kids, Michael Jackson, Kobe Bryant and crackheads, of course.

The Snipe: *Since he broke his $50 million contract with Comedy Central, Chappelle's going to need every last penny of royalties from this bitch!*

DVD

THE SIMPSONS: THE COMPLETE SIXTH SEASON

FOX Home Entertainment • August 16

The Hype: All 25 episodes, including Part One of the season cliffhanger "Who Shot Mr. Burns?"

The Snipe: *SPOILER ALERT! Maggie shot Mr. Burns, and she got off so scot-free you'd think they held the trial in Los Angeles.*

MUSIC

TWIN CINEMA

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS

Matador Records • August 23

The Hype: The Vancouver group releases its third album, adding a more personal, subtle tone to the sweeping, energetic vibe of their previous efforts. With four vocalists (including Neko Case) and band members playing everything from guitars and drums to xylophones and pump organs, there's a lot to listen to.

The Snipe: *Not for nothing, but there's six dudes in The New Pornographers. Six! If this is what "new" pornography is going to be like, we'll stick with the old stuff, thank you very much!*

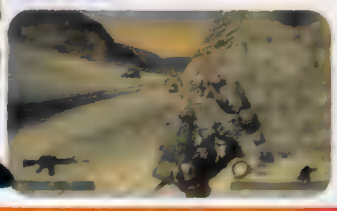
GAME

SOCOM 3: U.S. NAVY SEALs

PS2 • Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. • Fall

The Hype: Created in association with the U.S. Naval Special Warfare Command, SOCOM 3 is as close as you can get to being a Navy SEAL on PlayStation 2. Explore three new Areas of Operation (AO): Morocco, Poland, and South Asia.

The Snipe: *Poland? The Navy SEALs go to Poland? What, are they hungry for some kielbasa?*



THE MUST-HAVE!

COLD GALVANIZING SPRAY

POLYWATER

The Hype: Whether you're a professional or simply enjoy weld coating on weekends, Type CG Cold Galvanize is ideal for all your steel utility pole and pole line hardware needs! Powerful CG inhibits corrosion through sacrificial galvanic action, which means you won't be sacrificing any time worrying about damaged galvanized steel!

The Snipe: *If Hitler had a couple of cans of this stuff, we'd all be eating strudel!*

DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH! DO FETCH!

Duke Bissell's TALES OF UNDISPUTED INTEREST

I GOT HOME FROM THE SUPERMARKET ONE DAY AND DISCOVERED THE SALE CHEESE HAD GONE BAD.

I GUESS THREE-YEAR-OLD BRIE IN A CUP AT A NICKEL A POUND WAS JUST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.

SO I WENT BACK TO THE STORE TO GET A REFUND.

I THREW THESE TOMATOES AGAINST THE WALL AND THEY DIDN'T SMASH GOOD AT ALL.

I WONDER HOW LONG I CAN INHALE THESE FUMES BEFORE I...

EXCHANGE EARLY AND OFTEN

THE NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS IN A WORLD OF ETERNAL WONDER AND SPLENDIFEROUS IMAGERY.

IS DUKE YOUR REAL NAME?

I HEAR YOU'RE LACTOSE INTOLERANT.

YOUR HAT WILL HAVE TO EVENTUALLY COME OFF YOU KNOW.

DON'T LISTEN TO THE SWISS, LISTEN TO THE MUENSTER.

SUDDENLY, I WOKE UP IN A PLACE I LEAST EXPECTED.

YOU KNOW, JUST BECAUSE YOU MIGHT BE DYING DOESN'T MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY YOUR RENT.

I THOUGHT MY BUILDING WENT CO-OP.

DUKE, YOU CAN'T TRUST YOUR PERCEPTIONS AT THIS STAGE OF THE JOURNEY.

FOR A LONG TIME THINGS DIDN'T GET BETTER.

LISTEN DUKE, IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FEED ME FOR DAYS ON END LIKE THIS, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO START FEASTING ON YOUR HELPLESS YET STILL LIVING FLESH.

I THOUGHT I OWNED A CAT.

EVENTUALLY, I RECOVERED COMPLETELY AND TO CELEBRATE, INVITED SOME FRIENDS OVER.

THIS CHEDDAR DOESN'T TASTE TOO GOOD.

I THINK IT MIGHT BE VIBRATING.

HAVE SOME MORE. IT ONLY COST 25 CENTS A POUND.

P.C. VEY

THAT'S AMUSE TO ME DEPT.

Being dabblers in the sweet science of humor writing, each year MAD spends millions researching just what it is that makes our readers laugh. And every year we pretty much get back the same three responses: 1) Someone getting a pie in the face. 2) A really good fart joke. 3) Those great Don Martin cartoons you guys used to run! This year, we decided to try something different. We sent our researchers to find out what it is that prompts a smile, chuckle or guffaw from some *famous* people. And what they uncovered is nothing less than shocking. Here's...

WHAT CELEB LAUG

PARIS HILTON

Watching people, like, do work.

My parents trying to explain to their friends about my video.

The Three Stooges, except for Moe, who sometimes uses really big words.

RUSH LIMBAUGH

Every single time a black quarterback gets sacked.

One of the little red capsules, or two of the speckled blue tablets.

The way my servants freak out whenever I wear my fake INS badge.

BILL CLINTON

Remembering the time that Monica banged her head on the desk drawer.

Thinking ahead to how incredibly EASY it's going to be to score with Hillary out on the campaign trail.

Recalling how I got that intensive care nurse to "take my pulse" after my latest surgery.

ADAM SANDLER

The fact that more kids now know the words to my *Chanukah Song* than to *The First Noel.*

The way that, if they keep putting you in movies, people start referring to you as an "actor."

That, for some unknown reason, the "adolescent idiot" schtick has made *me* rich but hasn't done squat for Pauly Shore.

RITIES H AT

ARTIST: SAM SISCO

WRITER: BOB WIEDER

BRITNEY SPEARS

Any joke involving Christina Aguilera and a sexually-transmitted disease.

Garfield — both the cartoon *and* the movie.

When someone asks me if I do my own laundry.

ON STEWART

Those bitterly furious e-mails from Tucker Carlson vowing to "get" me someday.

Statistics showing that I'm the primary source of news for more people than Brit Hume and *Newsweek* combined.

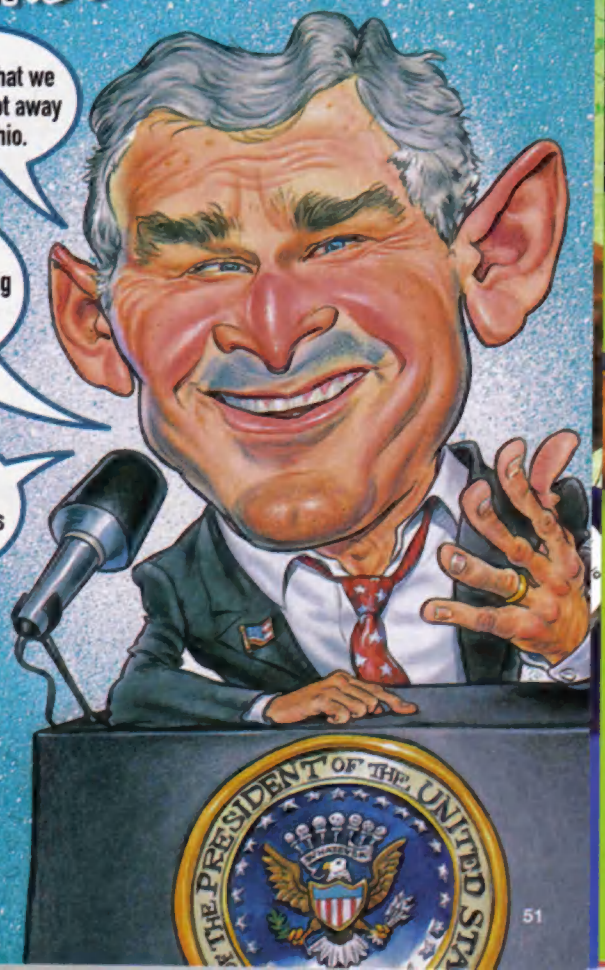
Any official White House press release.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The fact that we actually got away with Ohio.

The way condemned prisoners used to write to me begging for a pardon when I was governor of Texas.

Having Air Force One buzz John Kerry's house.



SIMON COWELL

Paula Abdul shrieking when I slip my hand under her butt just as she's taking her panel seat.

Reliving the moment when I heard Ryan Seacrest's show was cancelled.

Randy Jackson shrieking when I slip my hand under his butt just as he's taking his panel seat.

WHAT'S THE HOT NEW WAY MANY ARE GETTING THEIR MUSIC?

HERE WE GO WITH ANOTHER RIDICULOUS

MAD FOLD-IN

These days, it's never been easier to get a hold of your favorite songs. Although it does get expensive to maintain a music collection, many have found the perfect way to get around this problem. To find out what the solution is, fold page in as shown.

FOLD PAGE OVER LIKE THIS!

A FOLD PAGE OVER LEFT B FOLD BACK SO THAT "A" MEETS "B"

STEADILY IMPROVING TECHNOLOGY IS THRILLING FOR MUSIC LOVERS. MANY OF THEM — i.e. THOSE WHO HAVE LOTS OF MONEY — POUNCE ON EVERY NEW THING THAT'S IN ADS

A ARTIST AND WRITER: AL JAFFEE B